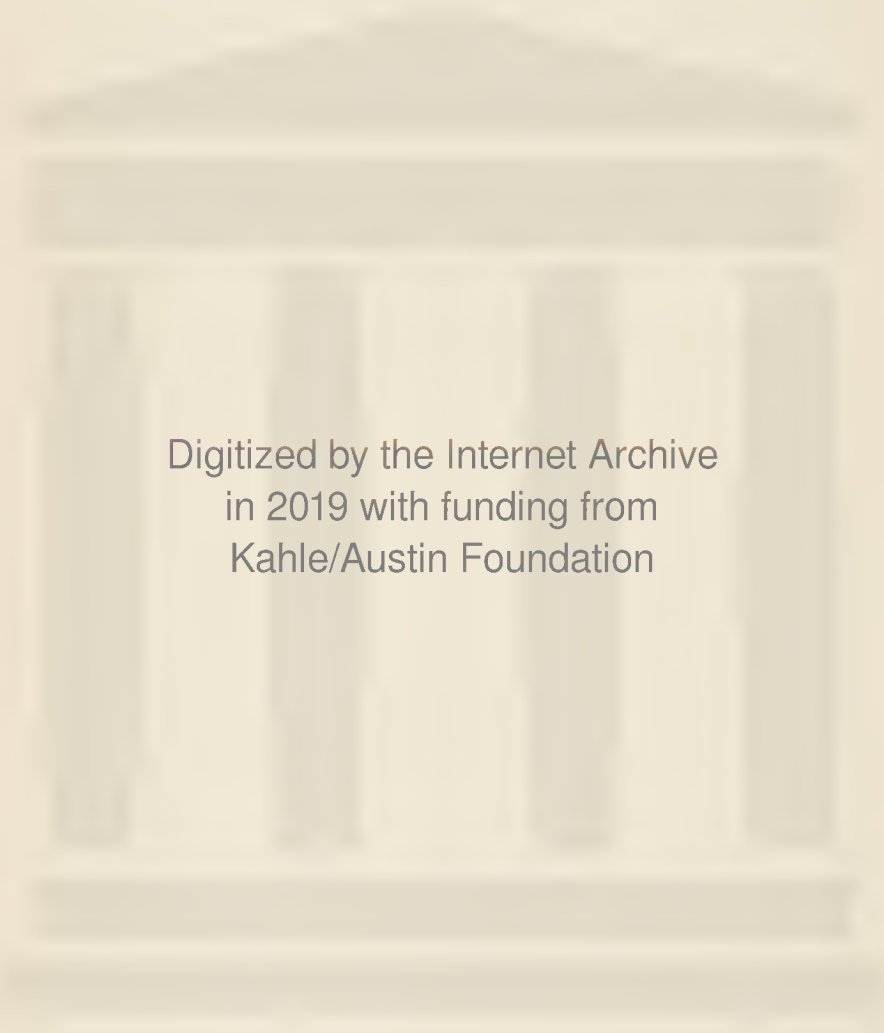
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THE LIFE AND WORKS OF CHARLES LAMB

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Leigh Hunt

Edition de Luxe

The Letters of Charles Lamb

Newly Arranged with Additions

Edited with Introduction and Notes by

ALFRED AINGER

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CHAPTER IV

1817—1823

LETTERS TO THE WORDSWORTHS, BERNARD BARTON, AND OTHERS

LETTER CLXXXIII

TO WILLIAM AYRTON, ESQ.

May 17, 1817.

MY dear friend,
Before I end,
Have you any
More orders for Don Giovanni,
To give
Him that doth live
Your faithful Zany?

Without raillery,
I mean Gallery
Ones:
For I am a person that shuns
All ostentation
And being at the top of the fashion;
And seldom go to operas
But *in formâ pauperis!*

I go to the play
In a very economical sort of a way,
Rather to see
Than be seen;
Though I'm no ill sight
Neither,
By candle-light

And in some kinds of weather.
You might pit me
For height
Against Kean;
But in a grand tragic scene
I 'm nothing:
It would create a kind of loathing
To see me act Hamlet;
There 'd be many a damn let
Fly
At my presumption,
If I should try,
Being a fellow of no gumption.

By the way, tell me candidly how you relish
This, which they call
The lapidary style?
Opinions vary.
The late Mr. Mellish
Could never abide it;
He thought it vile,
And coxcombical.
My friend the poet laureat,
Who is a great lawyer at
Anything comical,
Was the first who tried it;
But Mellish could never abide it;
But it signifies very little what Mellish said,
Because he is dead.

TO AYRTON

For who can confute
A body that 's mute?
Or who would fight
With a senseless sprite?
Or think of troubling
An inpenetrable old goblin,
That 's dead and gone,
And stiff as stone,
To convince him with arguments pro and con,
As if some live logician,
Bred up at Merton,—
Or Mr. Hazlitt, the metaphysician;—
Hey, Mr. Ayrton!
With all your rare tone.

For tell me how should an apparition
List to your call,
Though you talk'd for ever,
Ever so clever:
When his ear itself,
By which he must hear, or not hear at all,
Is laid on the shelf?
Or put the case
(For more grace),
It were a female spectre—
Now could you expect her
To take much gust
In long speeches,
With her tongue as dry as dust,
In a sandy place,

Where no peaches,
Nor lemons, nor limes, nor oranges hang,
To drop on the drought of an arid harangue,
Or quench,
With their sweet drench,
The fiery pangs which the worms inflict,
With their endless nibblings,
Like quibblings,
Which the corpse may dislike, but can ne'er contradict?
Hey, Mr. Ayrton!
With all your rare tone.

I am,
C. LAMB.

LETTER CLXXXIV

TO MR. BARRON FIELD

August 31, 1817.

MY DEAR BARRON—The bearer of this letter so far across the seas is Mr. Lawrey, who comes out to you as a missionary, and whom I have been strongly importuned to recommend to you as a most worthy creature by Mr. Fenwick, a very old, honest friend of mine; of whom, if my memory does not deceive me, you have had some knowledge heretofore as editor of the *Statesman;* a man of talent, and patriotic. If you can show him any facilities in his arduous undertaking, you will oblige us much. Well, and how does the land of thieves use you?

and how do you pass your time, in your extra-judicial intervals? Going about the streets with a lantern, like Diogenes, looking for an honest man? You may look long enough, I fancy. Do give me some notion of the manners of the inhabitants where you are. They don't thieve all day long, do they? No human property could stand such continuous battery. And what do they do when they an't stealing?

Have you got a theatre? What pieces are performed? Shakspeare's, I suppose; not so much for the poetry, as for his having once been in danger of leaving his country on account of certain "small deer."

Have you poets among you? Damn'd plagiarists, I fancy, if you have any. I would not trust an idea, or a pocket-handkerchief of mine, among 'em. You are almost competent to answer Lord Bacon's problem, whether a nation of atheists can subsist together. You are practically in one:—

> "So thievish 't is, that the eighth commandment itself
> Scarce seemeth there to be."

Our old honest world goes on with little perceptible variation. Of course you have heard of poor Mitchell's death, and that G. Dyer is one of Lord Stanhope's residuaries. I am afraid he has not touched much of the residue yet. He is positively as lean as Cassius. Barnes is going to Demerara, or Essequibo, I am not quite certain which. Alsager is turned actor. He came out in genteel comedy at Cheltenham this season, and has hopes of a London engagement.

For my own history, I am just in the same spot, doing the same thing (videlicet, little or nothing) as when you left me; only I have positive hopes that I shall be able to conquer that inveterate habit of smoking which you may remember I indulged in. I think of making a beginning this evening, viz. Sunday, 31st Aug. 1817, not Wednesday, 2nd Feb. 1818, as it will be perhaps when you read this for the first time. There is the difficulty of writing from one end of the globe (hemispheres, I call 'em) to another! Why, half the truths I have sent you in this letter will become lies before they reach you, and some of the lies (which I have mixed for variety's sake, and to exercise your judgment in the finding of them out) may be turned into sad realities before you shall be called upon to detect them. Such are the defects of going by different chronologies. Your "now" is not my "now"; and again, your "then" is not my "then"; but my "now" may be your "then," and *vice versâ*. Whose head is competent to these things?

How does Mrs. Field get on in her geography? Does she know where she is by this time? I am not sure sometimes you are not in another planet; but then I don't like to ask Capt. Burney, or any of those that know anything about it, for fear of exposing my ignorance.

Our kindest remembrances, however, to Mrs. F., if she will accept of reminiscences from another planet, or at least another hemisphere.

C. L.

MARY LAMB TO MISS WORDSWORTH

LETTER CLXXXV

MARY LAMB TO MISS WORDSWORTH

November 21, 1817.

MY DEAR MISS WORDSWORTH — Your kind letter has given us very great pleasure; the sight of your handwriting was a most welcome surprise to us. We have heard good tidings of you by all our friends who were so fortunate as to visit you this Summer, and rejoice to see it confirmed by yourself. You have quite the advantage, in volunteering a letter; there is no merit in replying to so welcome a stranger.

We have left the Temple. I think you will be sorry to hear this. I know I have never been so well satisfied with thinking of you at Rydal Mount, as when I could connect the idea of you with your own Grasmere Cottage. Our rooms were dirty and out of repair, and the inconveniences of living in chambers became every year more irksome, and so, at last, we mustered up resolution enough to leave the good old place, that so long had sheltered us, and here we are, living at a brazier's shop, No. 20, in Russell Street, Covent Garden, a place all alive with noise and bustle; Drury Lane Theatre in sight from our front, and Covent Garden from our back windows. The hubbub of the carriages returning from the play does not annoy me in the least; strange that it does not, for it is quite tremendous. I quite enjoy looking out of the window, and listen-

ing to the calling up of the carriages, and the squabbles of the coachmen and linkboys. It is the oddest scene to look down upon; I am sure you would be amused with it. It is well I am in a cheerful place, or I should have many misgivings about leaving the Temple. I look forward with great pleasure to the prospect of seeing my good friend, Miss Hutchinson. I wish Rydal Mount, with all its inhabitants enclosed, were to be transplanted with her, and to remain stationary in the midst of Covent Garden.

I passed through the street lately where Mr. and Mrs. Wordsworth lodged; several fine new houses, which were then just rising out of the ground, are quite finished, and a noble entrance made that way into Portland Place. I am very sorry for Mr. De Quincey. What a blunder the poor man made when he took up his dwelling among the mountains! I long to see my friend Pypos. Coleridge is still at Little Hampton with Mrs. Gillman; he has been so ill as to be confined to his room almost the whole time he has been there.

Charles has had all his Hogarths bound in a book; they were sent home yesterday, and now that I have them altogether, and perceive the advantage of peeping close at them through my spectacles, I am reconciled to the loss of them hanging round the room, which has been a great mortification to me—in vain I tried to console myself with looking at our new chairs and carpets, for we have got new chairs, and carpets covering all over our two sitting-rooms; I

missed my old friends and could not be comforted —then I would resolve to learn to look out of the window, a habit I never could attain in my life, and I have given it up as a thing quite impracticable— yet when I was at Brighton, last Summer, the first week I never took my eyes off from the sea, not even to look in a book: I had not seen the sea for sixteen years. Mrs. Morgan, who was with us, kept her liking, and continued her seat in the window till the very last, while Charles and I played truants, and wandered among the hills, which we magnified into little mountains, and *almost as good as* Westmoreland scenery: certainly we made discoveries of many pleasant walks, which few of the Brighton visitors have ever dreamed of—for, like as is the case in the neighbourhood of London, after the first two or three miles we were sure to find ourselves in a perfect solitude. I hope we shall meet before the walking faculties of either of us fail; you say you can walk fifteen miles with ease; that is exactly my stint, and more fatigues me; four or five miles every third or fourth day, keeping very quiet between, was all Mrs. Morgan could accomplish.

God bless you and yours. Love to all and each one.

I am ever yours most affectionately,

M. Lamb.

LETTER CLXXXVI

TO MISS WORDSWORTH

November 21, 1817.

DEAR Miss Wordsworth — Here we are, transplanted from our native soil. I thought we never could have been torn up from the Temple. Indeed it was an ugly wrench, but like a tooth, now 't is out, and I am easy. We never can strike root so deep in any other ground. This, where we are, is a light bit of gardener's mould, and if they take us up from it, it will cost no blood and groans, like mandrakes pulled up. We are in the individual spot I like best, in all this great city. The theatres, with all their noises. Covent Garden, dearer to me than any gardens of Alcinous, where we are morally sure of the earliest peas and 'sparagus. Bow Street, where the thieves are examined, within a few yards of us. Mary had not been here four-and-twenty hours before she saw a thief. She sits at the window working; and casually throwing out her eyes, she sees a concourse of people coming this way, with a constable to conduct the solemnity. These little incidents agreeably diversify a female life.

Mary has brought her part of this letter to an orthodox and loving conclusion, which is very well, for I have no room for pansies and remembrances. What a nice holyday I got on Wednesday by favour of a princess dying! C. L.

TO COLLIER

LETTER CLXXXVII

TO J. PAYNE COLLIER

The Garden of England,
December 10, 1817.

DEAR J. P. C.—I know how zealously you feel for our friend S. T. Coleridge; and I know that you and your family attended his lectures four or five years ago. He is in bad health, and worse mind: and unless something is done to lighten his mind he will soon be reduced to his extremities; and even these are not in the best condition. I am sure that you will do for him what you can; but at present he seems in a mood to do for himself. He projects a new course, not of physic, nor of metaphysic, nor a new course of life, but a new course of lectures on Shakspeare and Poetry. There is no man better qualified (always excepting number one); but I am pre-engaged for a series of dissertations on India and Indiapendence, to be completed, at the expense of the Company, in I know not (yet) how many volumes foolscap folio. I am busy getting up my Hindoo mythology; and, for the purpose, I am once more enduring Southey's curse. To be serious, Coleridge's state and affairs make me so; and there are particular reasons just now, and have been any time for the last twenty years, why he should succeed. He will do so with a little encouragement. I have not seen him lately; and he does not know that I am writing.

Yours (for Coleridge's sake) in haste, C. LAMB.

LETTER CLXXXVIII

TO BENJAMIN ROBERT HAYDON

December 1817.

MY DEAR HAYDON—I will come with pleasure to 22, Lisson Grove, North, at Rosse's, half-way up, right-hand side, if I can find it.

Yours, C. LAMB.

20, Russell Court,
Covent Garden, East.
Half-way up, next the corner,
Left-hand side.

LETTER CLXXXIX

TO MRS. WORDSWORTH

East India House,
February 18, 1818.

MY DEAR MRS. WORDSWORTH—I have repeatedly taken pen in hand to answer your kind letter. My sister should more properly have done it, but she having failed, I consider myself answerable for her debts. I am now trying to do it in the midst of commercial noises, and with a quill which seems more ready to glide into arithmetical figures and names of gourds, cassia, cardamoms, aloes, ginger, or tea, than into kindly responses and friendly recollections. The reason why I cannot write letters at home is, that I am never alone. Plato's—(I write to W. W. now)—Plato's double-animal parted never longed

more to be reciprocally re-united in the system of its first creation than I sometimes do to be but for a moment single and separate. Except my morning's walk to the office, which is like treading on sands of gold for that reason, I am never so. I cannot walk home from office but some officious friend offers his unwelcome courtesies to accompany me. All the morning I am pestered. I could sit and gravely cast up sums in great books, or compare sum with sum, and write "paid" against this, and "unpaid" against t'other, and yet reserve in some corner of my mind "some darling thoughts all my own,"—faint memory of some passage in a book, or the tone of an absent friend's voice—a snatch of Miss Burrell's singing, or a gleam of Fanny Kelly's divine plain face. The two operations might be going on at the same time without thwarting, as the sun's two motions (earth's, I mean), or as I sometimes turn round till I am giddy, in my back parlour, while my sister is walking longitudinally in the front; or as the shoulder of veal twists round with the spit, while the smoke wreathes up the chimney. But there are a set of amateurs of the Belles Lettres—the gay science—who come to me as a sort of rendezvous, putting questions of criticism, of British Institutions, Lalla Rookhs, etc.—what Coleridge said at the lecture last night —who have the form of reading men, but, for any possible use reading can be to them, but to talk of, might as well have been Ante-Cadmeans born, or have lain sucking out the sense of an Egyptian hiero-

glyph as long as the pyramids will last, before they should find it. These pests worrit me at business, and in all its intervals, perplexing my accounts, poisoning my little salutary warming-time at the fire, puzzling my paragraphs if I take a newspaper, cramming in between my own free thoughts and a column of figures, which had come to an amicable compromise but for them. Their noise ended, one of them, as I said, accompanies me home, lest I should be solitary for a moment; he at length takes his welcome leave at the door; up I go, mutton on table, hungry as hunter, hope to forget my cares, and bury them in the agreeable abstraction of mastication; knock at the door, in comes Mr. Hazlitt, or Mr. Martin Burney, or Morgan Demigorgon, or my brother, or somebody, to prevent my eating alone—a process absolutely necessary to my poor wretched digestion. O the pleasure of eating alone!—eating my dinner alone! let me think of it. But in they come, and make it absolutely necessary that I should open a bottle of orange; for my meat turns into stone when any one dines with me, if I have not wine. Wine can mollify stones; then *that* wine turns into acidity, acerbity, misanthropy, a hatred of my interrupters—(God bless 'em! I love some of 'em dearly), and with the hatred, a still greater aversion to their going away. Bad is the dead sea they bring upon me, choking and deadening, but worse is the deader dry sand they leave me on, if they go before bed-time. Come never, I would say to these spoilers of my dinner;

but if you come, never go! The fact is, this interruption does not happen very often; but every time it comes by surprise, that present bane of my life, orange wine, with all its dreary stifling consequences, follows. Evening company I should always like had I any mornings, but I am saturated with human faces (*divine* forsooth!) and voices all the golden morning; and five evenings in a week would be as much as I should covet to be in company; but I assure you that is a wonderful week in which I can get two, or one to myself. I am never C. L., but always C. L. and Co. He who thought it not good for man to be alone, preserve me from the more prodigious monstrosity of being never by myself! I forget bed-time, but even there these sociable frogs clamber up to annoy me. Once a week, generally some singular evening that, being alone, I go to bed at the hour I ought always to be a-bed; just close to my bedroom window is the club-room of a public-house, where a set of singers, I take them to be chorus-singers of the two theatres (it must be *both of them*), begin their orgies. They are a set of fellows (as I conceive) who, being limited by their talents to the burthen of the song at the play-houses, in revenge have got the common popular airs by Bishop, or some cheap composer, arranged for choruses; that is, to be sung all in chorus. At least I never can catch any of the text of the plain song, nothing but the Babylonish choral howl at the tail on 't. "That fury being quenched"—the howl, I mean—a burden succeeds of shouts and clapping,

and knocking of the table. At length overtasked nature drops under it, and escapes for a few hours into the society of the sweet silent creatures of dreams, which go away with mocks and mows at cock-crow. And then I think of the words Christabel's father used (bless me, I have dipt in the wrong ink!) to say every morning by way of variety when he awoke:

> "Every knell, the Baron saith,
> Wakes us up to a world of death"—

or something like it. All I mean by this senseless interrupted tale, is, that by my central situation I am a little over-companied. Not that I have any animosity against the good creatures that are so anxious to drive away the harpy solitude from me. I like 'em, and cards, and a cheerful glass; but I mean merely to give you an idea, between office confinement and after-office society, how little time I can call my own. I mean only to draw a picture, not to make an inference. I would not that I know of have it otherwise. I only wish sometimes I could exchange some of my faces and voices for the faces and voices which a late visitation brought most welcome, and carried away, leaving regret, but more pleasure, even a kind of gratitude, at being so often favoured with that kind northern visitation. My London faces and noises don't hear me—I mean no disrespect, or I should explain myself, that instead of their return 220 times a year, and the return of W. W., etc., seven times in 104 weeks, some more equal distri-

bution might be found. I have scarce room to put in Mary's kind love, and my poor name, C. LAMB.

W. H. goes on lecturing against W. W. and making copious use of quotations from said W. W. to give a zest to said lectures. S. T. C. is lecturing with success. I have not heard either him or H., but I dined with S. T. C. at Gillman's a Sunday or two since, and he was well and in good spirits. I mean to hear some of the course; but lectures are not much to my taste, whatever the lecturer may be. If *read*, they are dismal flat, and you can't think why you are brought together to hear a man read his works, which you could read so much better at leisure yourself. If delivered extempore, I am always in pain lest the gift of utterance should suddenly fail the orator in the middle, as it did me at the dinner given in honour of me at the London tavern. "Gentlemen," said I, and there I stopped; the rest my feelings were under the necessity of supplying. Mrs. Wordsworth *will* go on, kindly haunting us with visions of seeing the lakes once more, which never can be realised. Between us there is a great gulf, not of inexplicable moral antipathies and distances, I hope, as there seemed to be between me and that gentleman concerned in the Stamp Office, that I so strangely recoiled from at Haydon's. I think I had an instinct that he was the head of an office. I hate all such people—accountants' deputy accountants. The dear abstract notion of the East India Company,

as long as she is unseen, is pretty, rather poetical; but as she makes herself manifest by the persons of such beasts, I loathe and detest her as the scarlet what-do-you-call-her of Babylon. I thought, after abridging us of all our red-letter days, they had done their worst; but I was deceived in the length to which heads of offices, those true liberty-haters, can go. They are the tyrants; not Ferdinand, nor Nero. By a decree passed this week, they have abridged us of the immemorially-observed custom of going at one o'clock of a Saturday, the little shadow of a holiday left us. Dear W. W., be thankful for liberty.

LETTER CXC

TO MESSRS. OLLIER

June 18, 1818.

DEAR SIR (whichever opens it)—I am going off to Birmingh^{m}. I find my books, whatever faculty of selling they may have (I wish they had more for $\{^{your}_{my}\}$ sake), are admirably adapted for giving away. You have been bounteous. Six more, and I shall have satisfied all just claims. Am I taking too great a liberty in begging you to send 4 as follows, and reserve 2 for me when I come home? That will make 31. Thirty-one times 12 is 372 shillings—eighteen pounds twelve shillings! ! ! But here are my friends, to whom, if you *could* transmit them, as I shall be away a month, you will greatly

Oblige the obliged, C. LAMB.

TO MESSRS. OLLIER

Mr. Ayrton, James Street, Buckingham Gate;

Mr. Alsager, Suffolk Street East, Southwark, by Horsemonger Lane;

And in one parcel,

directed to R. Southey, Esq., Keswick, Cumberland:

One for R. S.;

And one for W^m^. Wordsworth, Esq.

If you will be kind enough simply to write "From the Author" in all 4, you will still further, etc.

Either Longman or Murray is in the frequent habit of sending books to Southey, and will take charge of the parcel. It will be as well to write in at the beginning thus:

"R. Southey, Esq. From the Author."

"W. Wordsworth, Esq. From the Author."

Then, if I can find the remaining 2 left for me at Russell S^t^. when I return, rather than encroach any more on the heap, I will engage to make no more new friends *ad infinitum*, yourselves being the last.

Yours truly, C. L.

I think Southey will give us a lift in that damn'd *Quarterly*. I meditate an attack upon that Cobbler Gifford, which shall appear immediately after any favourable mention which S. may make in the *Quarterly*. It can't, in decent *gratitude*, appear *before*.

LETTER CXCI

TO ROBERT SOUTHEY

Monday, October 26, 1818.

DEAR SOUTHEY—I am pleased with your friendly remembrances of my little things. I do not know whether I have done a silly thing or a wise one, but it is of no great consequence. I run no risk, and care for no censures. My bread and cheese is stable as the foundations of Leadenhall Street, and if it hold out as long as the "foundations of our Empire in the East," I shall do pretty well. You and W. W. should have had your presentation copies more ceremoniously sent, but I had no copies when I was leaving town for my holidays, and rather than delay, commissioned my bookseller to send them thus nakedly. By not hearing from W. W. or you, I began to be afraid Murray had not sent them. I do not see S. T. C. so often as I could wish. He never comes to me; and though his host and hostess are very friendly, it puts me out of my way to go see one person at another person's house. It was the same when he resided at Morgan's. Not but they also were more than civil; but, after all, one feels so welcome at one's own house. Have you seen poor Miss Betham's "Vignettes"? Some of them, the second particularly, "To Lucy," are sweet and good as herself, while she was herself. She is in some measure abroad again. I am *better than I deserve* to be. The hot weather has been such a treat! Mary

joins in this little corner in kindest remembrances to you all.

C. L.

LETTER CXCII

TO SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

December 24, 1818.

MY DEAR COLERIDGE—I have been in a state of incessant hurry ever since the receipt of your ticket. It found me incapable of attending you, it being the night of Kenney's new comedy, which has utterly failed. You know my local aptitudes at such a time; I have been a thorough rendezvous for all consultations. My head begins to clear up a little, but it has had bells in it. Thank you kindly for your ticket, though the mournful prognostic which accompanies it certainly renders its permanent pretensions less marketable; but I trust to hear many a course yet. You excepted Christmas week, by which I understood *next week;* I thought Christmas week was that which Christmas Sunday ushered in. We are sorry it never lies in your way to come to us; but, dear Mahomet, we will come to you. Will it be convenient to all the good people at Highgate, if we take a stage up, *not next Sunday,* but the following, viz., 3rd January, 1819? Shall we be too late to catch a skirt of the old out-goer? How the years crumble from under us! We shall hope to see you before then; but, if not,

let us know if *then* will be convenient. Can we secure a coach home?

Believe me ever yours, C. Lamb.

I have but one holiday, which is Christmas Day itself nakedly: no pretty garnish and fringes of St. John's Day, Holy Innocents, etc., that used to bestud it all around in the calendar. *Improbe labor!* I write six hours every day in this candle-light fogden at Leadenhall.

LETTER CXCIII

TO JOHN CHAMBERS

[*1818.*]

DEAR C.—I steal a few minutes from a painful and laborious avocation, aggravated by the absence of some that should assist me, to say how extremely happy we should be to see you return clean as the cripple out of the pool of Bethesda. That damn'd scorbutic—how came you by it? . . . You are now fairly a damaged lot; as Venn would say, One Scratched. You might play Scrub in the *Beaux' Stratagem.* The best post your friends could promote you to would be a scrubbing post. "Aye, there's the rub." I generally get tired after the third rubber. But you, I suppose, tire twice the number every day. First, there's your mother, she begins after breakfast; then your little sister takes it up about Nuncheon time, till her bones crack, and some

kind neighbour comes in to lend a hand, scrub, scrub, scrub, and nothing will get the intolerable itch (for I am persuaded it is the itch) out of your penance-doing bones. A cursed thing just at this time, when everybody wants to get out of town as well as yourself. Of course, I don't mean to reproach you. You can't help it, the whoreson tingling in your blood. I dare say you would if you could. But don't you think you could do a little work, if you came? as much as D—— does before 12 o'Clock. Hang him, there he sits at that cursed *Times*—and latterly he has had the *Berkshire Chronicle* sent him every Tuesday and Friday to get at the County news. Why, that letter which you favored him with, appears to me to be very well and clearly written. The man that wrote that might make out warrants, or write Committees. There was as much in quantity written as would have filled four volumes of the Indigo appendix; and when we are so busy as we are, every little helps. But I throw out these observations merely as innuendos. By the way there 's a Doctor Lamert in Leadenhall Street, who sells a mixture to purify the blood. No. 114 Leadenhall Street, near the market. But it is necessary that his Patients should be on the spot, that he may see them every day. There 's a sale of Indigo advertised for July, forty thousand lots—10,000 chests only, but they sell them in quarter chests which makes 40,000. By the bye a droll accident happened here on Thursday, Wadd and Plumley got quarrelling about a knee-

buckle of Hyde's which the latter affirmed not to be standard; Wadd was nettled at this, and said something reflecting on tradesmen and shopkeepers, and Plumley struck him. . . . Friend is married; he has married a Roman Catholic, which has offended his family, but they have come to an agreement, that the boys (if they have children) shall be bred up in the father's religion, and the girls in the mother's, which I think equitable enough. . . . I am determined my children shall be brought up in their father's religion, if they can find out what it is. Bye is about publishing a volume of poems which he means to dedicate to Matthie. Methinks he might have found a better Mecænas. They are chiefly amatory, others of them stupid, the greater part very far below mediocrity; but they discover much tender feeling; they are most like Petrarch of any foreign Poet, or what we might have supposed Petrarch would have written if Petrarch had been born a fool! Grinwallows is made master of the ceremonies at Dandelion, near Margate; of course he gives up the office. "My Harry" makes so many faces that it is impossible to sit opposite him without smiling. Dowley danced a Quadrille at Court on the Queen's birthday with Lady Thynne, Lady Desbrow, and Lady Louisa Manners. It is said his performance was graceful and airy. Cabel has taken an unaccountable fancy into his head that he is Fuller, member for Sussex. He imitates his blunt way of speaking. I remain much the same as you remember, very universally

beloved and esteemed, possessing everybody's goodwill, and trying at least to deserve it; the same steady adherence to principle, and correct regard for truth, which always marked my conduct, marks it still. If I am singular in anything it is in too great a squeamishness to anything that remotely looks like a falsehood. I am call'd Old Honesty; sometimes Upright Telltruth, Esq., and I own it tickles my vanity a little. The Committee have formally abolish'd all holydays whatsoever—for which may the Devil, who keeps no holydays, have them in his eternal burning workshop. When I say holydays, I mean Calendar holydays, for at Medley's instigation they have agreed to a sort of scale by which the Chief has power to give leave of absence, viz.:—

Those who have been 50 years and upwards to be absent 4 days in the year, but not without leave of the Chief.

35 years and upward, 3 days,
25 years and upward, 2 days,
18 years and upward, 1 day,

which I think very Liberal. We are also to sign our name when we *go* as well as when we *come*, and every quarter of an hour we sign, to show that we are here. Mins and Gardner take it in turn to bring round the book—O here *is* Mins with the Book—no, it's Gardner—"What's that, G.?" "The appearance book, Sir" (with a gentle inclination of his head, and smiling). "What the devil, is the quarter come again?" It annoys Dodwell amazingly; he

sometimes has to sign six or seven times while he is reading the Newspaper—

[*Unfinished.*]

LETTER CXCIV

TO WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

May 1819.

DEAR WORDSWORTH—I received a copy of "Peter Bell" a week ago, and I hope the author will not be offended if I say I do not much relish it. The humour, if it is meant for humour, is forced; and then the price!—sixpence would have been dear for it. Mind, I do not mean *your* "Peter Bell," but *a* "Peter Bell" which preceded it about a week, and is in every bookseller's shop window in London, the type and paper nothing differing from the true one, the preface signed W. W., and the supplementary preface quoting as the author's words an extract from the supplementary preface to the "Lyrical Ballads." Is there no law against these rascals? I would have this Lambert Simnel whipt at the cart's tail. Then there is Rogers! He has been re-writing your Poem of the Strid, and publishing it at the end of his "Human Life." Tie him up to the cart, hangman, while you are about it. Who started the spurious "P. B." I have not heard. I should guess, one of the sneering brothers, the vile Smiths; but I have heard no name mentioned. "Peter Bell" (not the mock one) is excellent; for its matter, I

mean. I cannot say that the style of it quite satisfies me. It is too lyrical. The auditors to whom it is feigned to be told, do not *arride* me. I would rather it had been told me, the reader, at once. "Heartleap Well" is the tale for me; in matter as good as this; in manner infinitely before it, in my poor judgment. Why did you not add "The Waggoner"?—Have I thanked you though, yet, for "Peter Bell"? I would not *not have it* for a good deal of money. C—— is very foolish to scribble about books. Neither his tongue nor fingers are very retentive. But I shall not say anything to him about it. He would only begin a very long story, with a very long face; and I see him far too seldom to teaze him with affairs of business or conscience when I do see him. He never comes near our house; and when we go to see him he is generally writing, or thinking. He is writing in his study till the dinner comes, and that is scarce over before the stage summons us away. The mock "P. B." had only this effect on me, that after twice reading it over in hopes to find something diverting in it, I reached your two books off the shelf, and set into a steady reading of them, till I had nearly finished both before I went to bed: the two of your last edition, of course, I mean: and in the morning I awoke determining to take down the *Excursion*. I wish the scoundrel imitator could know this. But why waste a wish on him? I do not believe that paddling about with a stick in a pond, and fishing up a dead author, whom *his* intolerable wrongs had

driven to that deed of desperation, would turn the heart of one of these obtuse literary BELLS. There is no Cock for such Peters;—damn 'em! I am glad this aspiration came upon the red ink line. It is more of a bloody curse. I have delivered over your other presents to Alsager and G. D. A., I am sure, will value it, and be proud of the hand from which it came. To G. D. a poem is a poem. His own as good as anybody's, and (God bless him!) anybody's as good as his own; for I do not think he has the most distant guess of the possibility of one poem being better than another. The gods, by denying him the very faculty itself of discrimination, have effectually cut off every seed of envy in his bosom. But with envy, they excited curiosity also; and if you wish the copy again, which you destined for him, I think I shall be able to find it again for you, on his third shelf, where he stuffs his presentation copies, uncut, in shape and matter resembling a lump of dry dust; but on carefully removing that stratum, a thing like a pamphlet will emerge. I have tried this with fifty different poetical works that have been given G. D. in return for as many of his own performances; and I confess I never had any scruple in taking *my own* again, wherever I found it, shaking the adherences off; and by this means one copy of "my works" served for G. D., and, with a little dusting, was made over to my good friend Dr. G——, who little thought whose leavings he was taking when he made that graceful bow. By the way, the Doctor is the

only one of my acquaintance who bows gracefully; my town acquaintance, I mean. How do you like my way of writing with two inks? I think it is pretty and motley. Suppose Mrs. W. adopts it, the next time she holds the pen for you. My dinner waits. I have no time to indulge any longer in these laborious curiosities. God bless you, and cause to thrive and burgeon whatsoever you write, and fear no inks of miserable poetasters.

Yours truly, CHARLES LAMB.

Mary's love.

LETTER CXCV

TO THOMAS MANNING

May 28, 1819.

MY DEAR M.—I want to know how your brother is, if you have heard lately. I want to know about you. I wish you were nearer. How are my cousins, the Gladmans of Wheathamstead, and farmer Bruton? Mrs. Bruton is a glorious woman.

Hail, Mackery End—

This is a fragment of a blank verse poem which I once meditated, but got no further. The E. I. H. has been thrown into a quandary by the strange phenomenon of poor Tommy Bye, whom I have known man and mad-man twenty-seven years, he being elder here than myself by nine years and more. He was always a pleasant, gossiping, half-headed,

muzzy, dozing, dreaming, walk-about, inoffensive chap; a little too fond of the creature—(who is n't at times?); but Tommy had not brains to work off an over-night's surfeit by ten o'clock next morning; and unfortunately, in he wandered the other morning drunk with last night, and with a superfœtation of drink taken in since he set out from bed. He came staggering under his double burthen, like trees in Java, bearing at once blossom, fruit, and falling fruit, as I have heard you or some other traveller tell, with his face literally as blue as the bluest firmament; some wretched calico, that he had mopped his poor oozy front with, had rendered up its native dye; and the devil a bit would he consent to wash it, but swore it was characteristic, for he was going to the sale of indigo, and set up a laugh which I did not think the lungs of mortal man were competent to. It was like a thousand people laughing, or the Goblin Page. He imagined afterwards that the whole office had been laughing at him, so strange did his own sounds strike upon his *non*-sensorium! But Tommy has laughed his last laugh, and awoke the next day to find himself reduced from an abused income of £600 per annum to one-sixth of the sum, after thirty-six years' tolerably good service. The quality of mercy was not strained in his behalf: the gentle dews dropt not on him from heaven. It just came across me that I was writing to Canton. Will you drop in to-morrow night? Fanny Kelly is coming, if she does not cheat us. Mrs. *Gold* is well, but



proves "uncoined," as the lovers about Wheathamstead would say.

I have not had such a quiet half hour to sit down to a quiet letter for many years. I have not been interrupted above four times. I wrote a letter the other day, in alternate lines, black ink and red, and you cannot think how it chilled the flow of ideas. Next Monday is Whit-Monday. What a reflection! Twelve years ago, and I should have kept that and the following holidays in the fields a-Maying. All of those pretty pastoral delights are over. This dead, everlasting dead desk,—how it weighs the spirit of a gentleman down! This dead wood of the desk, instead of your living trees! But then again, I hate the Joskins, *a name for Hertfordshire bumpkins.* Each state of life has its inconvenience; but then again, mine has more than one. Not that I repine, or grudge, or murmur at my destiny. I have meat and drink, and decent apparel; I shall, at least, when I get a new hat.

A red-haired man has just interrupted me. He has broke the current of my thoughts. I have n't a word to add. I don't know why I send this letter, but I have had a hankering to hear about you some days. Perhaps it will go off before your reply comes. If it don't, I assure you no letter was ever welcomer from you, from Paris or Macao.

C. Lamb.

LETTER CXCVI

TO WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

June 7, 1819.

MY DEAR WORDSWORTH—You cannot imagine how proud we are here of the dedication. We read it twice for once that we do the poem. I mean all through; yet "Benjamin" is no common favourite; there is a spirit of beautiful tolerance in it. It is as good as it was in 1806; and it will be as good in 1829, if our dim eyes shall be awake to peruse it. Methinks there is a kind of shadowing affinity between the subject of the narrative and the subject of the dedication; but I will not enter into personal themes else, substituting * * * * * * for Ben, and the Honourable United Company of Merchants trading to the East Indies, for the master of the misused team, it might seem, by no far-fetched analogy, to point its dim warnings hitherward; but I reject the omen, especially as its import seems to have been diverted to another victim.

I will never write another letter with alternate inks. You cannot imagine how it cramps the flow of the style. I can conceive Pindar (I do not mean to compare myself to *him*), by the command of Hiero, the Sicilian tyrant (was not he the tyrant of some place? fie on my neglect of history!)—I can conceive him by command of Hiero or Perillus set down to pen an Isthmian or Nemean panegyric in lines, alternate red and black. I maintain he could n't have

done it; it would have been a strait-laced torture to his muse; he would have call'd for the bull for a relief. Neither could Lycidas, nor the Chorics (how do you like the word?) of Samson Agonistes, have been written with two inks. Your couplets, with points, epilogues to Mr. H.'s, etc., might be even benefited by the twyfount, where one line (the second) is for point, and the first for rhyme. I think the alternation would assist, like a mould. I maintain it, you could not have written your stanzas on preexistence with two inks. Try another; and Rogers, with his silver standish, having one ink only, I will bet my "Ode on Tobacco," against the "Pleasures of Memory,"—and "Hope," too,—shall put more fervour of enthusiasm into the same subject than you can with your two; he shall do it *stans pede in uno*, as it were.

The "Waggoner" is very ill put up in boards; at least it seems to me always to open at the dedication; but that is a mechanical fault. I re-read the "White Doe of Rylstone"; the title should be always written at length, as Mary Sabilla Novello, a very nice woman of our acquaintance, always signs hers at the bottom of the shortest note. Mary told her, if her name had been Mary Ann, she would have signed M. A. Novello, or M. only, dropping the A.; which makes me think, with some other trifles, that she understands something of human nature. My pen goes galloping on most rhapsodically, glad to have escaped the bondage of two inks.

Manning had just sent it home, and it came as fresh to me as the immortal creature it speaks of. M. sent it home with a note, having this passage in it: "I cannot help writing to you while I am reading Wordsworth's poem. I am got into the third canto, and say that it raises my opinion of him very much indeed. 'T is broad, noble, poetical, with a masterly scanning of human actions, absolutely above common readers. What a manly (implied) interpretation of (bad) party-actions, as trampling the Bible, etc.!" and so he goes on.

I do not know which I like best,—the prologue (the latter part especially) to "P. Bell," or the epilogue to "Benjamin." Yes, I tell stories; I do know I like the last best; and the "Waggoner" altogether is a pleasanter remembrance to me than the "Itinerant." If it were not, the page before the first page would and ought to make it so. The sonnets are not all new to me; of those which are new, the ninth I like best. Thank you for that to Walton. I take it as a favour done to me, that, being so old a darling of mine, you should bear testimony to his worth in a book containing a dedic——: I cannot write the vain word at full length any longer.

If, as you say, the "Waggoner," in some sort, came at my call, oh for a potent voice to call forth the "Recluse" from his profound dormitory, where he sleeps forgetful of his foolish charge—the world!

Had I three inks, I would invoke him! Talfourd has written a most kind review of J. Woodvil, etc.,

in the *Champion*. He is your most zealous admirer, in solitude and in crowds. H. Crabb Robinson gives me any dear prints that I happen to admire; and I love him for it and for other things. Alsager shall have his copy; but at present I have lent it *for a day only*, not choosing to part with my own. Mary's love. How do you all do, amanuenses both—marital and sororal?

C. LAMB.

LETTER CXCVII

TO JOSEPH COTTLE

Nov. 5, 1819.

DEAR SIR—It is so long since I have seen or heard from you, that I fear that you will consider a request I have to make as impertinent. About three years since, when I was one day in Bristol, I made an effort to see you; but you were from home. The request I have to make is, that you would very much oblige me, if you have any small portrait of yourself, by allowing me to have it copied, to accompany a selection of "Likenesses of Living Bards" which a most particular friend of mine is making. If you have no objections, and could oblige me by transmitting such portrait to me at No. 44 Russell Street, Covent Garden, I will answer for taking the greatest care of it, and returning it safely the instant the copier has done with it. I hope you will pardon the liberty from an old friend and well-wisher,

CHARLES LAMB.

LETTER CXCVIII

[*November* or *December*] *1819.*

DEAR SIR—My friend, whom you have obliged by the loan of your picture, has had it very exactly copied (and a very spirited drawing it is; so every one thinks who has seen it). The copy is not much inferior, done by a daughter of Josephs, R.A. He purposes sending you back the original, which I must accompany with my warm thanks, both for that, and your better favour, the Messiah, which I assure you I have read through with great pleasure; the verses have great sweetness, and a New Testament-plainness about them which affected me very much. I could just wish that in page 63 you had omitted the lines 71 and 72, and had ended the period with—

> "The willowy brook was there, but that sweet sound—
> *When* to be heard again on Earthly ground?"

Two very sweet lines, and the sense perfect.

And in page 154, line 68,—"I come ordained a world to save"—these words are hardly borne out by the story, and seem scarce accordant with the modesty with which our Lord came to take his common portion among the baptismal candidates. They also anticipate the beauty of John's recognition of the Messiah, and the subsequent confirmation from the voice and Dove.

You will excuse the remarks of an old brother

bard, whose career, though long since pretty well stopped, was coeval in its beginning with your own, and who is sorry his lot has been always to be so distant from you. It is not likely that C. L. will see Bristol again; but, if J. C. should ever visit London, he will be a most welcome visitor to C. L. My sister joins in cordial remembrances. . . .

Dear Sir, yours truly, CHARLES LAMB.

LETTER CXCIX

London, India House,
[Close of year] 1819.

MY DEAR SIR—I am quite ashamed of not having acknowledged your kind present earlier; but that unknown something, which was never yet discovered, though so often speculated upon, which stands in the way of lazy folks answering letters, has presented its usual obstacle. It is not forgetfulness nor disrespect nor incivility, but terribly like all these bad things.

I have been in my time a great epistolary scribbler: but the passion, and with it the facility, at length wears out; and it must be pumped up again by the heavy machinery of duty or gratitude, when it should run free. I have read your "Fall of Cambria" with as much pleasure as I did your "Messiah." Your Cambrian Poem I shall be tempted to repeat oftenest, as human poems take me in a mood more frequently congenial than divine. The character of

Llewellyn pleases me more than anything else, perhaps; and then some of the lyrical pieces are fine varieties.

It was quite a mistake that I could dislike anything you should write against Lord Byron; for I have a thorough aversion to his character, and a very moderate admiration of his genius: he is great in so little a way. To be a Poet is to be the Man, not a petty portion of occasional low passion worked up in a permanent form of humanity. Shakspeare has thrust such rubbishly feelings into a corner,—the dark dusky heart of Don John, in the *Much Ado about Nothing*. The fact is, I have not seen your "Expostulatory Epistle" to him. I was not aware, till your question, that it was out. I shall inquire, and get it forthwith.

Southey is in town, whom I have seen slightly; Wordsworth expected, whom I hope to see much of. I write with accelerated motion; for I have two or three bothering clerks and brokers about me, who always press in proportion as you seem to be doing something that is not business. I could exclaim a little profanely; but I think you do not like swearing.

I conclude, begging you to consider that I feel myself much obliged by your kindness; and shall be most happy at any and at all times to hear from you.

Dear Sir, yours truly, CHARLES LAMB.

TO COLERIDGE—MISS WORDSWORTH

LETTER CC

TO SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

November 1819.

DEAR Coleridge—Your sonnet is capital. The paper is ingenious, only that it split into four parts (besides a side splinter) in the carriage. I have transferred it to the common English paper *manufactured of rags*, for better preservation. I never knew before how the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* were written. 'T is strikingly corroborated by observations on Cats. These domestic animals, put 'em on a rug before the fire, wink their eyes up, and listen to the kettle, and then purr, which is *their* poetry.

On Sunday week we kiss your hands (if they are clean). This next Sunday I have been engaged for some time.

With remembrances to your good host and hostess,
Yours ever, C. Lamb.

LETTER CCI

TO MISS WORDSWORTH

November 25, 1819.

DEAR Miss Wordsworth—You will think me negligent: but I wanted to see more of Willy before I ventured to express a prediction. Till yesterday I had barely seen him—*Virgilium tantum vidi*—but yesterday he gave us his small company to

a bullock's heart, and I can pronounce him a lad of promise. He is no pedant, nor bookworm; so far I can answer. Perhaps he has hitherto paid too little attention to other men's inventions, preferring, like Lord Foppington, the "natural sprouts of his own." But he has observation, and seems thoroughly awake. I am ill at remembering other people's *bon mots*, but the following are a few:—Being taken over Waterloo Bridge, he remarked, that if we had no mountains, we had a fine river at least; which was a touch of the comparative: but then he added, in a strain which augured less for his future abilities as a political economist, that he supposed they must take at least a pound a week toll. Like a curious naturalist he inquired if the tide did not come up a little salty. This being satisfactorily answered, he put another question, as to the flux and reflux; which being rather cunningly evaded than artfully solved by that she-Aristotle, Mary,—who muttered something about its getting up an hour sooner and sooner every day,—he sagely replied, "Then it must come to the same thing at last"; which was a speech worthy of an infant Halley! The lion in the 'Change by no means came up to his ideal standard; so impossible is it for Nature, in any of her works, to come up to the standard of a child's imagination! The whelps (lionets) he was sorry to find were dead; and on particular inquiry, his old friend the ourang-outang had gone the way of all flesh also. The grand tiger was also sick, and expected in no short time

to exchange this transitory world for another, or none. But again, there was a golden eagle (I do not mean that of Charing) which did much arride and console him. William's genius, I take it, leans a little to the figurative; for, being at play at tricktrack (a kind of minor billiard-table which we keep for smaller wights, and sometimes refresh our own mature fatigues with taking a hand at), not being able to hit a ball he had iterate aimed at, he cried out, "I cannot hit that beast!" Now the balls are usually called men, but he felicitously hit upon a middle term; a term of approximation and imaginative reconciliation; a something where the two ends of the brute matter (ivory), and their human and rather violent personification into men, might meet, as I take it—illustrative of that excellent remark, in a certain preface about imagination, explaining "Like a sea-beast that had crawled forth to sun himself!" Not that I accuse William Minor of hereditary plagiary, or conceive the image to have come *ex traduce.* Rather he seemeth to keep aloof from any source of imitation, and purposely to remain ignorant of what mighty poets have done in this kind before him; for, being asked if his father had ever been on Westminster Bridge, he answered that he did not know!

It is hard to discern the oak in the acorn, or a temple like St. Paul's in the first stone which is laid; nor can I quite prefigure what destination the genius of William Minor hath to take. Some few

hints I have set down, to guide my future observations. He hath the power of calculation, in no ordinary degree for a chit. He combineth figures, after the first boggle, rapidly; as in the tricktrack board, where the hits are figured. At first he did not perceive that 15 and 7 made 22; but by a little use he could combine 8 with 25, and 33 again with 16, which approacheth something in kind (far let me be from flattering him by saying in degree) to that of the famous American boy. I am sometimes inclined to think I perceive the future satirist in him, for he hath a sub-sardonic smile which bursteth out upon occasion; as when he was asked if London were as big as Ambleside; and indeed no other answer was given, or proper to be given, to so ensnaring and provoking a question. In the contour of the skull, certainly I discern something paternal. But whether in all respects the future man shall transcend his father's fame, Time, the trier of Geniuses, must decide. Be it pronounced peremptorily at present, that Willy is a well-mannered child, and though no great student, hath yet a lively eye for things that lie before him.

Given in haste from my desk at Leadenhall.

Yours, and yours most sincerely,

C. Lamb.

TO COLERIDGE

LETTER CCII

TO SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

January 10, 1820.

DEAR COLERIDGE—A letter written in the blood of your poor friend would indeed be of a nature to startle you; but this is nought but harmless red ink, or, as the witty mercantile phrase hath it, clerk's blood. Hang 'em! my brain, skin, flesh, bone, carcase, soul, time is all theirs. The Royal Exchange, Gresham's Folly, hath me body and spirit. I admire some of Lloyd's lines on you, and I admire your postponing reading them. He is a sad tattler; but this is under the rose. Twenty years ago he estranged one friend from me quite, whom I have been regretting, but never could regain since. He almost alienated you also from me, or me from you, I don't know which; but that breach is closed. The "dreary sea" is filled up. He has lately been at work "telling again," as they call it, a most gratuitous piece of mischief, and has caused a coolness betwixt me and (not a friend exactly, but) an intimate acquaintance. I suspect also he saps Manning's faith in me, who am to Manning more than an acquaintance. Still I like his writing verses about you. Will your kind host and hostess give us a dinner next Sunday; and, better still, *not expect us* if the weather is very bad? Why you should refuse twenty guineas per sheet for Blackwood's, or any other magazine, passes my poor comprehension. But, as Strap says,

"you know best." I have no quarrel with you about præprandial avocations; so don't imagine one. That Manchester sonnet I think very likely is Capel Lofft's. Another sonnet appeared with the same initials in the same paper, which turned out to be Procter's. What do the rascals mean? Am I to have the fathering of what idle rhymes every beggarly poetaster pours forth? Who put your marine sonnet, and about Browne, into *Blackwood?*—I did not. So no more, till we meet.

Ever yours, C. L.

LETTER CCIII

TO MISS WORDSWORTH

[*Thursday, May 25, 1820.*]

DEAR Miss W.—I have volunteered to reply to your note because of a mistake I am desirous of rectifying on the spot. There can be none to whom the last volume of W. W. has come more welcome than to me. I have traced the Duddon in thought and with repetition along the banks (alas!) of the Lea—(unpoetical name): it is always flowing and murmuring in my ears. The story of Dion is divine—the genius of Plato falling on him like moonlight—the finest thing ever expressed.

Then there is *Elidure* and *Kirkstone Pass*—the last not new to me—and let me add one of the sweetest of all to me, *The Longest Day.* Loving all these as much as I can love Poetry, new to me, what

could I wish or desire or extravagantly desiderate in a new volume? That I did not write to W. W. was simply that he was to come so soon, and that flattens letters.

I admired your averted looks on Saturday. You did not observe M. Burney's averted look also? You might have been supposed two Antipathies, or quarrelled lovers. The fact was, M. B. had a black eye he was desirous of concealing—an artificial one I mean, not of nature's making, but of art's reflecting, for nobody quarrels with the black eyes the former gives—but it was curious to see you both ashamed of such Panegyrical objects as black eyes and white teeth have always been considered. . . . Mary is not here to see the stuff I write, else she would snatch the pen out of my hand and conclude with some sober kind messages.

We sincerely wish your brother better.

Yours, both of us kindly,

C. L. and M. L.

LETTER CCIV

TO THOMAS ALLSOP

March 30, 1821.

MY DEAR SIR—If you can come next Sunday we shall be equally glad to see you, but do not trust to any of Martin's appointments, except on business, in future. He is notoriously faithless in that point, and we did wrong not to have warned

you. Leg of Lamb, as before, hot at 4. And the heart of Lamb ever.

Yours truly, C. L.

LETTER CCV

TO SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

May 1, 1821.

DR. C.—I will not fail you on Friday by six, and Mary, perhaps, earlier. I very much wish to meet Master Mathew, and am very much obliged to the Gillmans for the opportunity. Our kind respects to them always,

ELIA.

LETTER CCVI

TO MR. GILLMAN

Wednesday, May 2, '21.

DEAR SIR—You dine so late on Friday, it will be impossible for us to go home by the eight o'clock stage. Will you oblige me by securing us beds in some house from which a stage goes to the Bank in the morning? I would write to Coleridge, but cannot think of troubling a dying man with such a request.

Yours truly, C. LAMB.

If the beds in the town are all engaged, in consequence of Mr. Mathews's appearance, a hackney coach will serve.

TO COLLIER

We shall neither of us come much before the time.

LETTER CCVII

TO JOHN PAYNE COLLIER

[*Kingsland Row, Dalston,*]
May 16, 1831.

DEAR J. P. C.—Many thanks for the "Decameron": I have not such a gentleman's book in my collection: it was a great treat to me, and I got it just as I was wanting something of the sort. I take less pleasure in books than heretofore, but I like books about books. In the second volume, in particular, are treasures—your discoveries about "Twelfth Night," etc. What a Shakspearian essence that speech of Osrades for food!—Shakspeare is coarse to it—beginning "Forbear and eat no more." Osrades warms up to that, but does not set out ruffian-swaggerer. The character of the Ass with those three lines, worthy to be set in gilt vellum, and worn in frontlets by the noble beasts for ever—

> "Thou would, perhaps, he should become thy foe,
> And to that end dost beat him many times:
> He cares not for himself, much less thy blow."

Cervantes, Sterne, and Coleridge, have said positively nothing for asses compared with this.

I write in haste; but p. 24, vol. i., the line you cannot appropriate is Gray's sonnet, specimenifyed by Wordsworth in first preface to L. B., as mixed

of bad and good style: p. 143, 2nd vol., you will find last poem but one of the collection on Sidney's death in Spenser, the line,

"Scipio, Cæsar, Petrarch of our time."

This fixes it to be Raleigh's: I had guess'd it to be Daniel's. The last after it, "Silence augmenteth rage," I will be crucified if it be not Lord Brooke's. Hang you, and all meddling researchers, hereafter, that by raking into learned dust may find me out wrong in my conjecture!

Dear J. P. C., I shall take the first opportunity of personally thanking you for my entertainment. We are at Dalston for the most part, but I fully hope for an evening soon with you in Russell or Bouverie Street, to talk over old times and books. Remember *us* kindly to Mrs. J. P. C.

Yours very kindly, CHARLES LAMB.

I write in misery.

N. B.—The best pen I could borrow at our butcher's: the ink, I verily believe, came out of the kennel.

LETTER CCVIII

TO J. TAYLOR

July 30, 1821.

DEAR SIR—You will do me injustice if you do not convey to the writer of the beautiful lines, which I now return you, my sense of the extreme

kindness which dictated them. Poor Elia (call him *Ellia*) does not pretend to so very clear revelations of a future state of being as Olen seems gifted with. He stumbles about dark mountains at best; but he knows at least how to be thankful for this life, and is too thankful indeed for certain relationships lent him here, not to tremble for a possible resumption of the gift. He is too apt to express himself lightly, and cannot be sorry for the present occasion, as it has called forth a reproof so Christian-like. His *animus* at least (whatever become of it in the female termination) hath always been *cum Christianis.*

Pray make my gratefullest respects to the Poet (do I flatter myself when I hope it may be Montgomery?) and say how happy I should feel myself in an acquaintance with him. I will just mention that in the middle of the second column, where I have affixed a cross, the line

"One in a skeleton's ribb'd hollow cooped,"

is undoubtedly wrong. Should it not be—

"A skeleton's rib or ribs?"

or,

"In a skeleton ribb'd, hollow-coop'd?"

I perfectly remember the plate in Quarles. In the first page esoteric is pronounced esóteric. It should be (if that is the word) esotéric. The false accent may be corrected by omitting the word *old.* Pray, for certain reasons, give me to the 18th *at furthest extremity* for my next.

Poor Elia, the real (for I am but a counterfeit), is dead. The fact is, a person of that name, an Italian, was a fellow-clerk of mine at the South-Sea House, thirty (not forty) years ago, when the characters I described there existed, but had left it like myself many years; and I having a brother now there, and doubting how he might relish certain descriptions in it, I clapt down the name of Elia to it, which passed off pretty well, for Elia himself added the function of an author to that of a scrivener, like myself.

I went the other day (not having seen him for a year) to laugh over with him at my usurpation of his name, and found him, alas! no more than a name, for he died of consumption eleven months ago, and I knew not of it.

So the name has fairly devolved to me, I think; and 'tis all he has left me.

Dear Sir, yours truly, C. Lamb.

Messrs. Taylor & Hessey, Fleet Street,
for J. Taylor, Esq.

LETTER CCIX

TO C. COWDEN CLARKE

[*1821.*]

My dear Sir—Your letter has lain in a drawer of my desk, upbraiding me every time I open the said drawer, but it is almost impossible to answer such a letter in such a place, and I am out of

the habit of replying to epistles otherwhere than at office. You express yourself concerning Hunt like a true friend, and have made me feel that I have somehow neglected him, but without knowing very well how to rectify it. I live so remote from him—by Hackney—that he is almost out of the pale of visitation at Hampstead. And I come but seldom to Covt. Gardn. this summer time, and when I do, am sure to pay for the late hours and pleasant Novello suppers which I incur. I also am an invalid. But I will hit upon some way, that you shall not have cause for your reproof in future. But do not think I take the hint unkindly. When I shall be brought low by any sickness or untoward circumstance, write just such a letter to some tardy friend of mine—or come up yourself with your friendly Henshaw face—and that will be better. I shall not forget in haste our casual day at Margate. May we have many such there or elsewhere! God bless you for your kindness to H., which I will remember. But do not show Novello this, for the flouting infidel doth mock when Christians cry God bless us. Yours and *his*, *too*, and all our little circle's most affect^e^.

C. Lamb.

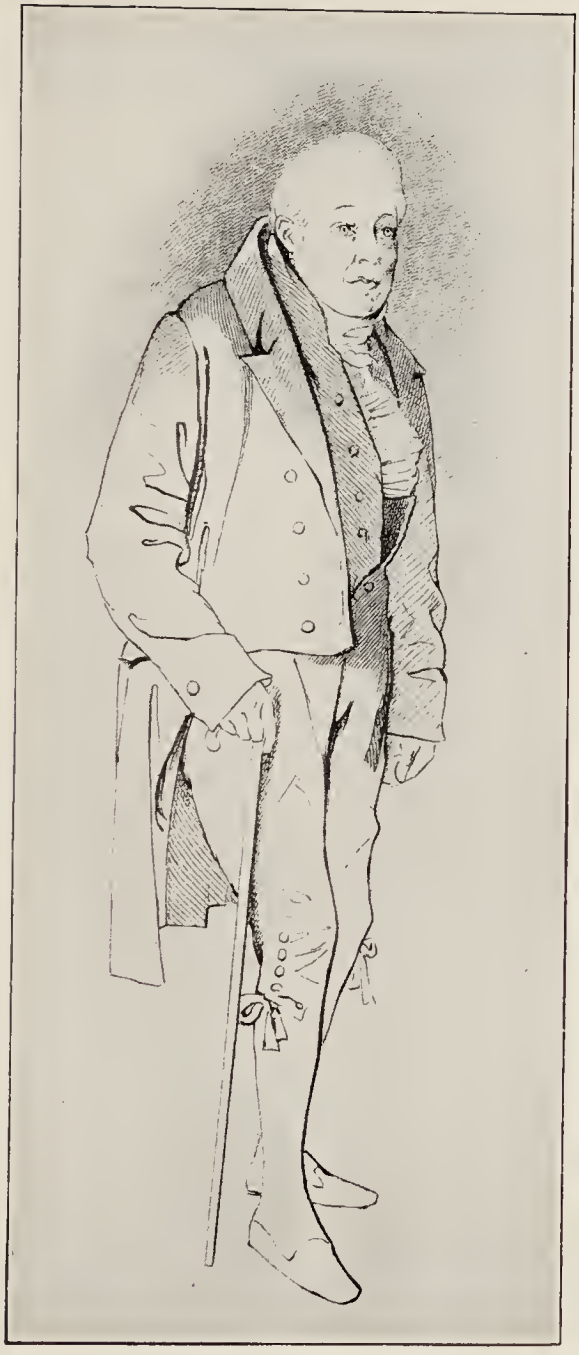
Mary's love included.

LETTER CCX

TO SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

March 9, 1822.

DEAR COLERIDGE—It gives me great satisfaction to hear that the pig turned out so well: they are interesting creatures at a certain age. What a pity such buds should blow out into the maturity of rank bacon! You had all some of the crackling and brain sauce. Did you remember to rub it with butter, and gently dredge it a little, just before the crisis? Did the eyes come away kindly with no Œdipean avulsion? Was the crackling the colour of the ripe pomegranate? Had you no complement of boiled neck of mutton before it, to blunt the edge of delicate desire? Did you flesh maiden teeth in it? Not that *I* sent the pig, or can form the remotest guess what part Owen could play in the business. I never knew him give anything away in my life. He would not begin with strangers. I suspect the pig, after all, was meant for me; but at the unlucky juncture of time being absent, the present somehow went round to Highgate. To confess an honest truth, a pig is one of those things which I could never think of sending away. Teal, widgeon, snipes, barn-door fowls, ducks, geese—your tame villatic things—Welsh mutton, collars of brawn, sturgeon, fresh or pickled, your potted char, Swiss cheeses, French pies, early grapes, muscadines, I impart as freely unto my friends as to myself. They are but self-ex-



tended; but pardon me if I stop somewhere. Where the fine feeling of benevolence giveth a higher smack than the sensual rarity, there my friends (or any good man) may command me; but pigs are pigs, and I myself therein am nearest to myself. Nay, I should think it an affront, an undervaluing done to Nature who bestowed such a boon upon me, if in a churlish mood I parted with the precious gift. One of the bitterest pangs of remorse I ever felt was when a child—when my kind old aunt had strained her pocket-strings to bestow a sixpenny whole plum-cake upon me. In my way home through the Borough I met a venerable old man, not a mendicant, but thereabouts; a look-beggar, not a verbal petitionist; and in the coxcombry of taught charity I gave away the cake to him. I walked on a little in all the pride of an Evangelical peacock, when of a sudden my old aunt's kindness crossed me; the sum it was to her; the pleasure she had a right to expect that I—not the old impostor—should take in eating her cake; the ingratitude by which, under the colour of a Christian virtue, I had frustrated her cherished purpose. I sobbed, wept, and took it to heart so grievously, that I think I never suffered the like; and I was right. It was a piece of unfeeling hypocrisy, and it proved a lesson to me ever after. The cake has long been masticated, consigned to the dunghill with the ashes of that unseasonable pauper.

But when Providence, who is better to us all

than our aunts, gives me a pig, remembering my temptation and my fall, I shall endeavour to act towards it more in the spirit of the donor's purpose.

Yours (short of pig) to command in everything.

C. L.

LETTER CCXI

TO WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

March 20, 1822.

MY DEAR WORDSWORTH—A letter from you is very grateful; I have not seen a Kendal post-mark so long! We are pretty well, save colds and rheumatics, and a certain deadness to everything, which I think I may date from poor John's loss, and another accident or two at the same time, that have made me almost bury myself at Dalston, where yet I see more faces than I could wish. Deaths overset one, and put one out long after the recent grief. Two or three have died within the last two twelvemonths, and so many parts of me have been numbed. One sees a picture, reads an anecdote, starts a casual fancy, and thinks to tell of it to this person in preference to every other: the person is gone whom it would have peculiarly suited. It won't do for another. Every departure destroys a class of sympathies. There 's Captain Burney gone! What fun has whist now? What matters it what you lead, if you can no longer fancy him looking over you? One never hears anything, but the image of the

particular person occurs with whom alone almost you would care to share the intelligence. Thus one distributes oneself about; and now for so many parts of me I have lost the market. Common natures do not suffice me. Good people, as they are called, won't serve. I want individuals. I am made up of queer points, and I want so many answering needles. The going away of friends does not make the remainder more precious. It takes so much from them as there was a common link. A. B. and C. make a party. A. dies. B. not only loses A.; but all A.'s part in C. C. loses A.'s part in B., and so the alphabet sickens by subtraction of interchangeables. I express myself muddily, *capite dolente*. I have a dulling cold. My theory is to enjoy life, but my practice is against it. I grow ominously tired of official confinement. Thirty years have I served the Philistines, and my neck is not subdued to the yoke. You don't know how wearisome it is to breathe the air of four pent walls without relief, day after day, all the golden hours of the day between ten and four, without ease or interposition. *Tædet me harum quotidianarum formarum*, these pestilential clerk-faces always in one's dish. Oh for a few years between the grave and the desk!—they are the same, save that at the latter you are the outside machine. The foul enchanter——("letters four do form his name"—Busirane is his name in hell), that has curtailed you of some domestic comforts, hath laid a heavier hand on me, not in present infliction, but in taking away

the hope of enfranchisement. I dare not whisper to myself a pension on this side of absolute incapacitation and infirmity, till years have sucked me dry;—*Otium cum indignitate.* I had thought in a green old age (Oh green thought!) to have retired to Ponder's End (emblematic name, how beautiful!), in the Ware Road, there to have made up my accounts with Heaven and the company, toddling about between it and Cheshunt; anon stretching, on some fine Izaak Walton morning, to Hoddesdon or Amwell, careless as a beggar; but walking, walking ever till I fairly walked myself off my legs, dying walking! The hope is gone. I sit like Philomel all day (but not singing), with my breast against this thorn of a desk, with the only hope that some pulmonary affliction may relieve me. *Vide* Lord Palmerston's report of the clerks in the War Office (Debates in this morning's *Times*), by which it appears, in twenty years as many clerks have been coughed and catarrhed out of it into their freer graves. Thank you for asking about the pictures. Milton hangs over my fire-side in Covent Garden (when I am there); the rest have been sold for an old song, wanting the eloquent tongue that should have set them off! You have gratified me with liking my meeting with Dodd. For the Malvolio story —the thing is become in verity a sad task, and I eke it out with anything. If I could slip out of it I should be happy, but our chief-reputed assistants have forsaken us. The Opium-Eater crossed us once

with a dazzling path, and hath as suddenly left us darkling; and, in short, I shall go on from dull to worse, because I cannot resist the booksellers' importunity—the old plea you know of authors, but I believe on my part sincere. Hartley I do not so often see; but I never see him in unwelcome hour. I thoroughly love and honour him. I send you a frozen epistle, but it is Winter and dead time of the year with me. May heaven keep something like Spring and Summer up with you, strengthen your eyes, and make mine a little lighter to encounter with them, as I hope they shall yet and again, before all are closed.

Yours, with every kind remembrance.

C. L.

I had almost forgot to say, I think you thoroughly right about presentation copies. I should like to see you print a book I should grudge to purchase for its size. Hang me, but I would have it, though!

LETTER CCXII

TO WILLIAM GODWIN

India House, April 13, 1822.

DEAR GODWIN—I cannot imagine how you, who never in your writings have expressed yourself disrespectfully of any one but your Maker, can have given offence to Rickman.

I have written to the Numberer of the People to

ask when it will be convenient to him to be at home to Mr. Booth. I think it probable he may be out of town in the Parliamentary recess, but doubt not of a speedy answer. Pray return my recognition to Mr. Booth, from whose excellent Tables of Interest I daily receive inexpressible official facilities.

Yours ever, C. LAMB.

LETTER CCXIII

May 16, 1822.

DEAR GODWIN—I sincerely feel for all your trouble. Pray use the enclosed £50, and pay me when you can. I shall make it my business to see you very shortly.

Yours truly, C. LAMB.

LETTER CCXIV

TO JOHN CLARE

India House, August 31, 1822.

DEAR CLARE—I thank you heartily for your present. I am an inveterate old Londoner, but while I am among your choice collections I seem to be native to them and free of the country. The quality of your observation has astonished me. What have most pleased me have been "Recollections after a Ramble," and those "Grongar Hill" kind of pieces in eight syllable lines, my favourite measure, such as "Cooper Hill" and "Solitude." In some of your story-telling Ballads the provincial phrases some-

times startle me. I think you are too profuse with them. In poetry *slang* of every kind is to be avoided. There is a rustic Cockneyism, as little pleasing as ours of London. Transplant Arcadia to Helpstone. The true rustic style I think is to be found in Shenstone. Would his "Schoolmistress," the prettiest of poems, have been better if he had used quite the Goody's own language? Now and then a home rusticism is fresh and startling; but when nothing is gained in expression, it is out of tenor. It may make folks smile and stare; but the ungenial coalition of barbarous with refined phrases will prevent you in the end from being so generally tasted, as you desire to be. Excuse my freedom, and take the same liberty with my *puns*.

I send you two little volumes of my spare hours. They are of all sorts: there is a Methodist hymn for Sundays and a farce for Saturday night. Pray give them a place on your shelf. Pray accept a little volume, of which I have a duplicate, that I may return in equal number to your welcome presents. I think I am indebted to you for a sonnet in the *London* for August?

Since I saw you I have been in France, and have eaten frogs. The nicest little rabbity things you ever tasted. Do look about for them. Make Mrs. Clare pick off the hind quarters, boil them plain, with parsley and butter. The fore quarters are not so good. She may let them hop off by themselves.

Yours sincerely, CHAS. LAMB.

LETTER CCXV

TO BERNARD BARTON

India House,
September 11, 1822.

DEAR SIR—You have misapprehended me sadly, if you suppose that I meant to impute any inconsistency in your writing poetry with your religious profession. I do not remember what I said, but it was spoken sportively, I am sure—one of my levities, which you are not so used to as my older friends. I probably was thinking of the light in which your so indulging yourself would appear to Quakers, and put their objection in my own foolish mouth. I would eat my words (provided they should be written on not very coarse paper) rather than I would throw cold water upon your, and my once, harmless occupation.

I have read "Napoleon" and the rest with delight. I like them for what they are, and for what they are not. I have sickened on the modern rhodomontade and Byronism, and your plain Quakerish beauty has captivated me. It is all wholesome cates; ay, and toothsome too; and withal Quakerish. If I were George Fox, and George Fox licenser of the press, they should have my absolute *imprimatur*. I hope I have removed the impression.

I am, like you, a prisoner to the desk. I have been chained to that galley thirty years,—a long shot. I have almost grown to the wood. If no imaginative

poet, I am sure I am a figurative one. Do "Friends" allow puns? *verbal* equivocations? They are unjustly accused of it; and I did my little best in the "Imperfect Sympathies" to vindicate them. I am very tired of clerking it, but have no remedy. Did you see a Sonnet to this purpose in the *Examiner?*—

> "*Who* first invented work, and bound the free
> And holy-day rejoicing spirit down
> To the ever-haunting importunity
> Of business, in the green fields and the town,
> To plough, loom, anvil, spade; and oh, most sad,
> To that dry drudgery at the desk's dead wood?
> Who but the being unblest, alien from good,
> Sabbathless Satan! he who his unglad
> Task ever plies, 'mid rotatory burnings,
> That round and round incalculably reel;
> For wrath Divine hath made him like a wheel
> In that red realm from which are no returnings;
> Where, toiling and turmoiling, ever and aye,
> He and his thoughts keep pensive worky-day."

I fancy the sentiment exprest above will be nearly your own. The expression of it probably would not so well suit with a follower of John Woolman. But I do not know whether diabolism is a part of your creed, or where indeed to find an exposition of your creed at all. In feelings and matters not dogmatical, I hope I am half a Quaker. Believe me, with great respect, yours,

C. Lamb.

I shall always be happy to see or hear from you.

LETTER CCXVI

TO MRS. KENNEY

London, September 11, 1822.

DEAR Mrs. K.—Mary got home safe on Friday night. She has suffered only a common fatigue, but as she is weakly, begs me to thank you in both our names for all the trouble she has been to you. She did not succeed in saving Robinson's fine waistcoat. They could not comprehend how a waistcoat, marked Henry Robinson, could be a part of Miss Lamb's wearing apparel. So they seized it for the king, who will probably appear in it at the next levee. Next to yourself, our best thanks to H. Payne. I was disappointed he came not with her. Tell Kenney the Cow has got out, by composition, paying so much in the pound. The canary bird continues her sleep-persuading strains. Pray say to Ellen that I think the verses very pretty which she slipt into my pocket on the last day of my being at Versailles. The stanzas on Ambition are fine, allowing for the age of the writer. The thought that the present King of Spain whom I suppose she means by the "brown monarch," sitting in state among his grandees, is like

"A sparrow lonely on the house's top,"

is perhaps a little forced. The next line is better,

"Too high to stoop, though not afraid to drop."

Pray deliver what follows to my dear wife Sophy.

TO FIELD

My dear Sophy—the few short days of connubial felicity which I passed with you among the pears and apricots of Versailles were some of the happiest of my life. But they are flown!

And your other half—your dear co-twin—that she-you—that almost equal sharer of my affections: you and she are my better half, a quarter a-piece. She and you are my pretty sixpence—you the head, and she the tail. Sure, Heaven that made you so alike must pardon the error of an inconsiderate moment, should I for love of you, love her too well. Do you think laws were made for lovers? I think not.

Adieu, amiable Pair, Yours and yours,

C. Lamb.

P.S.—I enclose half a dear kiss a-piece for you.

LETTER CCXVII

TO MR. BARRON FIELD

September 22, 1822.

My dear F.—I scribble hastily at office. Frank wants my letter presently. I and sister are just returned from Paris!! We have eaten frogs. It has been such a treat! You know our monotonous tenor. Frogs are the nicest little delicate things—rabbity-flavoured. Imagine a Lilliputian rabbit! They fricassee them; but in my mind, drest seethed, plain, with parsley and butter, would have been the decision of Apicius. Paris is a glorious picturesque

old city. London looks mean and new to it, as the town of Washington would, seen after it. But they have no St. Paul's, or Westminster Abbey. The Seine, so much despised by Cockneys, is exactly the size to run through a magnificent street; palaces a mile long on one side, lofty Edinbro' stone (O the glorious antiques!) houses on the other. The Thames disunites London and Southwark. I had Talma to supper with me. He has picked up, as I believe, an authentic portrait of Shakspeare. He paid a broker about £40 English for it. It is painted on the one half of a pair of bellows,—a lovely picture, corresponding with the folio head. The bellows has old carved *wings* round it, and round the visnomy is inscribed, as near as I remember, not divided into rhyme—I found out the rhyme—

"Whom have we here,
Stuck on the bellows,
But the Prince of good fellows,
Willy Shakspeare?"

At top—

"O base and coward luck
To be here stuck!"—Poins.

At bottom—

"Nay! rather a glorious lot is to him assign'd,
Who, like the Almighty, rides upon the *wind*."
Pistol.

This is all in old carved wooden letters. The countenance smiling, sweet, and intellectual beyond

measure, even as he was immeasurable. It may be a forgery. They laugh at me and tell me Ireland is in Paris, and has been putting off a portrait of the Black Prince. How far old wood may be imitated I cannot say. Ireland was not found out by his parchments, but by his poetry. I am confident no painter on either side the Channel could have painted anything near like the face I saw. Again, would such a painter and forger have taken £40 for a thing, if authentic, worth £4000? Talma is not in the secret, for he had not even found out the rhymes in the first inscription. He is coming over with it, and, my life to Southey's Thalaba, it will gain universal faith.

The letter is wanted, and I am wanted. Imagine the blank filled up with all kind things.

Our joint hearty remembrances to both of you.

Yours, as ever, C. LAMB.

LETTER CCXVIII

TO BERNARD BARTON

East India House,
October 9, 1822.

DEAR SIR—I am ashamed not sooner to have acknowledged your letter and poem. I think the latter very temperate, very serious, and very seasonable. I do not think it will convert the club at Pisa, neither do I think it will satisfy the bigots on our side the water. Something like a parody on the song of Ariel would please them better:—

"Full fathom five the Atheist lies,
Of his bones are hell-dice made."

I want time, or fancy, to fill up the rest. I sincerely sympathise with you on your doleful confinement. Of time, health, and riches, the first in order is not last in excellence. Riches are chiefly good because they give us Time. What a weight of wearisome prison hours have I to look back and forward to, as quite cut out of life! and the sting of the thing is, that for six hours every day I have no business which I could not contract into two, if they would let me work task-work. I shall be glad to hear that your grievance is mitigated. Shelley I saw once. His voice was the most obnoxious squeak I ever was tormented with, ten thousand times worse than the Laureate's, whose voice is the worst part about him, except his Laureateship. Lord Byron opens upon him on Monday in a parody (I suppose) of the *Vision of Judgment*, in which latter the Poet I think did not much show *his*. To award his Heaven and his Hell in the presumptuous manner he has done, was a piece of immodesty as bad as Shelleyism.

I am returning a poor letter. I was formerly a great scribbler in that way, but my hand is out of order. If I said my head too, I should not be very much out, but I will tell no tales of myself; I will therefore end (after my best thanks, with a hope to see you again some time in London), begging you to accept this letteret for a letter—a leveret makes a

better present than a grown hare, and short troubles (as the old excuse goes) are best.

I hear that Lloyd is well, and has returned to his family. I think this will give you pleasure to hear.

I remain, dear Sir, yours truly, C. LAMB.

LETTER CCXIX

TO B. R. HAYDON

India House, October 19, 1822.

DEAR HAYDON—Poor Godwin has been turned out of his house and business in Skinner Street, and if he does not pay two years' arrears of rent, he will have the whole stock, furniture, etc., of his new house (in the Strand) seized when term begins. We are trying to raise a subscription for him. My object in writing this is simply to ask you, if this is a kind of case which would be likely to interest Mrs. Coutts in his behalf, and *who*, in your opinion, is the best person to speak with her on his behalf. Without the aid of from £300 to £400 by that time, early in November, he will be ruined. You are the only person I can think of, of his acquaintance, and can perhaps, if not yourself, recommend the person most likely to influence her. Shelley had engaged to clear him of all demands, and he has gone down to the deep insolvent.

Yours truly, C. LAMB.

Is Sir Walter to be applied to, and by what channel?

LETTER CCXX

Tuesday [*October 29, 1822*].

DEAR H.—I have written a very respectful letter to Sir W. S. Godwin did not write, because he leaves all to his Committee, as I will explain to you. If this rascally weather holds you will see but one of us on that day.

Yours, with many thanks,

CHARLES LAMB.

LETTER CCXXI

TO JOHN HOWARD PAYNE

Thursday, November 1822.

"ALI PACHA" will do. I sent my sister the first night, not having been able to go myself, and her report of its effect was most favourable. I saw it last night—the third night—and it was most satisfactorily received. I have been sadly disappointed in Talfourd, who does the critiques in the "Times," and who promised his strenuous services; but by some damn'd arrangement he was sent to the wrong house, and a most iniquitous account of "Ali" substituted for his, which I am sure would have been a kind one. The "Morning Herald" did it ample justice, without appearing to puff it. It is an abominable misrepresentation of the "Times," that Farren played Ali like Lord Ogilby. He acted infirmity of body, but not of voice or purpose. His manner was

even grand. A grand old gentleman. His falling to the earth when his son's death was announced was fine as anything I ever saw. It was as if he had been blasted. Miss Foote looked helpless and beautiful, and greatly helped the piece. It is going on steadily, I am sure, for *many nights*. Marry, I was a little disappointed with Hassan, who tells us he subsists by cracking court jests before Hali; but he made none. In all the rest, scenery and machinery, it was faultless. I hope it will bring you here. I should be most glad of that. I have a room for you, and you shall order your own dinner three days in the week. I must retain my own authority for the rest. As far as magazines go, I can answer for Talfourd in the "New Monthly." He cannot be put out there. But it is established as a favourite, and can do without these expletives. I long to talk over with you the Shakspeare Picture. My doubts of its being a forgery mainly rest upon the goodness of the picture. The bellows might be trumped up, but where did the painter spring from? Is Ireland a consummate artist —or any of Ireland's accomplices?—but we shall confer upon it, I hope. The "New Times," I understand was favourable to "Ali," but I have not seen it. I am sensible of the want of method in this letter, but I have been deprived of the connecting organ by a practice I have fallen into since I left Paris, of taking too much strong spirits of a night. I must return to the Hotel de l'Europe and Macon.

How is Kenney? Have you seen my friend White?

What is Poole about, etc.? Do not write, but come and answer me.

The weather is charming, and there is a mermaid to be seen in London. You may not have the opportunity of inspecting such a *Poissarde* once again in ten centuries.

My sister joins me in the hope of seeing you.

Yours truly, C. LAMB.

LETTER CCXXII

Wednesday, November 13, '22.

DEAR P.—Owing to the inconvenience of having two lodgings, I did not get your letter quite so soon as I should. The India House is my proper address, where I am sure for the fore part of every day. The instant I got it, I addressed a letter, for Kemble to see, to my friend Henry Robertson, the Treasurer of Covent Garden Theatre. He had a conference with Kemble, and the result is, that Robertson, in the name of the management, recognised to me the full ratifying of your bargain: £250 for "Ali," the "Slaves," and another piece which they had not received. He assures me the whole will be paid you, or the proportion for the two former, as soon as ever the Treasury will permit it. He offered to write the same to you, if I pleased. He thinks in a month or so they will be able to liquidate it. He is positive no trick could be meant you, as Mr. Planché's alterations, which were tri-

fling, were not at all considered as affecting your bargain. With respect to the copyright of "Ali," he was of opinion no money would be given for it, as "Ali" is quite laid aside. This explanation being given, you would not think of printing the two copies together by way of recrimination. He told me the secret of the two "Galley Slaves" at Drury Lane. Elliston, if he is informed right, engaged Poole to translate it, but before Poole's translation arrived, finding it coming out at Cov. Gar., he procured copies of two several translations of it in London. So you see here are four translations, reckoning yours. I fear no copyright would be got for it, for anybody may print it and anybody has. Yours has run seven nights, and R. is of opinion it will not exceed in number of nights the nights of "Ali" —about thirteen. But your full right to your bargain with the management is in the fullest manner recognised by him officially. He gave me every hope the money will be spared as soon as they can spare it. He said *a month or two*, but seemed to me to mean about *a month*. A new lady is coming out in Juliet, to whom they look very confidently for replenishing their treasury. Robertson is a very good fellow and I can rely upon his statement. Should you have any more pieces, and want to get a copyright for them, I am the worst person to negotiate with any bookseller, having been cheated by all I have had to do with (except Taylor and Hessey,— but they do not publish theatrical pieces), and I

know not how to go about it, or who to apply to. But if you had no better negotiator, I should know the minimum you expect, for I should not like to make a bargain out of my own head, being (after the Duke of Wellington) the worst of all negotiators. I find from Robertson you have written to Bishop on the subject. Have you named anything of the copyright of the "Slaves"? R. thinks no publisher would pay for it, and you would not risk it on your own account. This is a mere business letter, so I will just send my love to my little wife at Versailles, to her dear mother, etc.

Believe me, yours truly, C. L.

LETTER CCXXIII

TO J. TAYLOR

December 7, 1822.

DEAR SIR—I should like the enclosed Dedication to be printed, unless you dislike it. I like it. It is in the olden style. But if you object to it, put forth the book as it is; only pray don't let the printer mistake the word *curt* for *curst.*

C. L.

DEDICATION

TO THE FRIENDLY AND JUDICIOUS READER

who will take these Papers, as they were meant; not understanding everything perversely in its absolute and literal sense, but giving fair construc-

tion, as to an after-dinner conversation; allowing for the rashness and necessary incompleteness of first thoughts; and not remembering, for the purpose of an after taunt, words spoken peradventure after the fourth glass, the Author wishes (what he would will for himself) plenty of good friends to stand by him, good books to solace him, prosperous events to all his honest undertakings, and a candid interpretation to his most hasty words and actions. The other sort (and he hopes many of them will purchase his book too) he greets with the curt invitation of Timon, "Uncover, dogs, and lap": or he dismisses them with the confident security of the philosopher,—"you beat but on the case of Elia." On better consideration, pray omit that Dedication. The Essays want no Preface: they are *all Preface*. A Preface is nothing but a talk with the reader; and they do nothing else. Pray omit it.

There will be a sort of Preface in the next Magazine, which may act as an advertisement, but not proper for the volume.

Let Elia come forth bare as he was born.

C. L.

Messrs. Taylor and Hessey,
Booksellers, Fleet Street.

No Preface.

LETTER CCXXIV

TO MR. WALTER WILSON

E. I. H., December 16, 1822.

DEAR WILSON—*Lightning* I was going to call you. You must have thought me negligent in not answering your letter sooner. But I have a habit of never writing letters but at the office; 't is so much time cribbed out of the Company; and I am just got out of the thick of a tea-sale, in which most of the entry of notes, deposits, etc., usually falls to my share.

I have nothing of De Foe's but two or three novels and the "Plague History." I can give you no information about him. As a slight general character of what I remember of them (for I have not looked into them latterly), I would say that in the appearance of *truth*, in all the incidents and conversations that occur in them, they exceed any works of fiction I am acquainted with. It is perfect illusion. The *author* never appears in these self-narratives (for so they ought to be called, or rather autobiographies), but the *narrator* chains us down to an implicit belief in everything he says. There is all the minute detail of a log-book in it. Dates are painfully pressed upon the memory. Facts are repeated over and over in varying phases, till you cannot choose but believe them. It is like reading evidence given in a court of justice. So anxious the story-teller seems that the truth should be clearly comprehended, that when he

has told us a matter of fact or a motive, in a line or two farther down he *repeats* it, with his favourite figure of speech, "I say," so and so, though he had made it abundantly plain before. This is in imitation of the common people's way of speaking, or rather of the way in which they are addressed by a master or mistress, who wishes to impress something upon their memories, and has a wonderful effect upon matter-of-fact readers. Indeed it is to such principally that he writes. His style is everywhere beautiful, but plain and *homely*. Robinson Crusoe is delightful to all ranks and classes, but it is easy to see that it is written in phraseology peculiarly adapted to the lower conditions of readers; hence it is an especial favourite with seafaring men, poor boys, servant-maids, etc. His novels are capital kitchen-reading, while they are worthy, from their deep interest, to find a shelf in the libraries of the wealthiest and the most learned. His passion for *matter-of-fact narrative* sometimes betrayed him into a long relation of common incidents, which might happen to any man, and have no interest but the intense appearance of truth in them, to recommend them. The whole latter half or two-thirds of "Colonel Jack" is of this description. The beginning of "Colonel Jack" is the most affecting natural picture of a young thief that was ever drawn. His losing the stolen money in the hollow of a tree, and finding it again when he was in despair, and then being in equal distress at not knowing how to dispose of it,

and several similar touches in the early history of the Colonel, evince a deep knowledge of human nature; and putting out of question the superior *romantic* interest of the latter, in my mind very much exceed Crusoe. "Roxana" (first edition) is the next in interest, though he left out the best part of it in subsequent editions from a foolish hyper-criticism of his friend Southerne. But "Moll Flanders," the "Account of the Plague," etc., are all of one family, and have the same stamp of character.

Believe me, with friendly recollections, *Brother* (as I used to call you), yours,

C. Lamb.

LETTER CCXXV

TO BERNARD BARTON

December 23, 1822.

Dear Sir—I have been so distracted with business and one thing or other, I have not had a quiet quarter of an hour for epistolary purposes. Christmas, too, is come, which always puts a rattle into my morning skull. It is a visiting, unquiet, unquakerish season. I get more and more in love with solitude, and proportionately hampered with company. I hope you have some holidays at this period. I have one day—Christmas Day; alas! too few to commemorate the season. All work and no play dulls me. Company is not play, but many times hard work. To play, is for a man to do what he pleases,

or to do nothing—to go about soothing his particular fancies. I have lived to a time of life to have outlived the good hours, the nine o'clock suppers, with a bright hour or two to clear up in afterwards. Now you cannot get tea before that hour, and then sit gaping, music-bothered perhaps, till half-past twelve brings up the tray; and what you steal of convivial enjoyment after, is heavily paid for in the disquiet of to-morrow's head.

I am pleased with your liking *John Woodvil*, and amused with your knowledge of our drama being confined to Shakspeare and Miss Baillie. What a world of fine territory between Land's End and Johnny Groat's have you missed traversing! I could almost envy you to have so much to read. I feel as if I had read all the books I want to read. O to forget Fielding, Steele, etc., and read 'em new!

Can you tell me a likely place where I could pick up, cheap, Fox's journal? There are no Quaker circulating libraries? Elwood, too, I must have. I rather grudge that Southey has taken up the history of your people: I am afraid he will put in some levity. I am afraid I am not quite exempt from that fault in certain magazine articles, where I have introduced mention of them. Were they to do again, I would reform them. Why should not you write a poetical account of your old worthies, deducing them from Fox to Woolman? But I remember you did talk of something in that kind, as a counterpart to the "Ecclesiastical Sketches." But

would not a poem be more consecutive than a string of sonnets? You have no martyrs *quite to the fire*, I think, among you; but plenty of heroic confessors, spirit-martyrs, lamb-lions. Think of it; it would be better than a series of sonnets on "Eminent Bankers." I like a hit at our way of life, though it does well for me, better than anything short of *all one's time to one's self;* for which alone I rankle with envy at the rich. Books are good, and pictures are good, and money to buy them therefore good; but to buy *time!* in other words, life!

The "compliments of the time" to you should end my letter; to a Friend, I suppose, I must say the "sincerity of the season"; I hope they both mean the same. With excuses for this hastily-penned note, believe me, with great respect,

C. Lamb.

LETTER CCXXVI

TO MISS WORDSWORTH

Mary perfectly approves of the appropriation of the *feathers*, and wishes them peacock's for your fair niece's sake.

Christmas 1822.

Dear Miss Wordsworth—I had just written the above endearing words when Monkhouse tapped me on the shoulder with an invitation to cold goose pie, which I was not bird of that sort enough to decline. Mrs. M——, I am most happy

to say, is better. Mary has been tormented with rheumatism, which is leaving her. I am suffering from the festivities of the season. I wonder how my misused carcass holds it out. I have played the experimental philosopher on it, that's certain. Willy shall be welcome to a mince-pie, and a bout at commerce whenever he comes. He was in our eye. I am glad you liked my new year's speculations: everybody likes them, except the author of the *Pleasures of Hope*. Disappointment attend him! How I like to be liked, and *what I do* to be liked! They flatter me in magazines, newspapers, and all the minor reviews; the Quarterlies hold aloof. But they must come into it in time, or their leaves be waste paper. Salute Trinity Library in my name. Two special things are worth seeing at Cambridge, a portrait of Cromwell, at Sydney, and a better of Dr. Harvey (who found out that blood was red), at Dr. Davy's; you should see them. Coleridge is pretty well. I have not seen him, but hear often of him from Allsop, who sends me hares and pheasants twice a week; I can hardly take so fast as he gives. I have almost forgotten butcher's meat, as plebeian. Are you not glad the cold is gone? I find Winters not so agreeable as they used to be "when Winter bleak had charms for me." I cannot conjure up a kind similitude for those snowy flakes. Let them keep to twelfth cakes!

Mrs. Paris, our Cambridge friend, has been in town. You do not know the Watfords in Trumping-

ton Street. They are capital people. Ask anybody you meet who is the biggest woman in Cambridge, and I'll hold you a wager they'll say Mrs. Smith. She broke down two benches in Trinity gardens, one on the confines of St. John's, which occasioned a litigation between the Societies as to repairing it. In warm weather she retires into an ice-cellar (literally!) and dates the returns of the years from a hot Thursday some twenty years back. She sits in a room with opposite doors and windows, to let in a thorough draught, which gives her slenderer friends tooth-aches. She is to be seen in the market every morning, at ten, cheapening fowls, which I observe the Cambridge poulterers are not sufficiently careful to stump.

Having now answered most of the points contained in your letter, let me end with assuring you of our very best kindness, and excuse Mary from not handling the pen on this occasion, especially as it has fallen into so much better hands! Will Dr. W. accept of my respects at the end of a foolish letter?

C. L.

LETTER CCXXVII

TO —— DIBDIN, ESQ.

1822.

IT is hard when a gentleman cannot remain concealed, who affecteth obscurity with greater avidity than most do seek to have their good deeds

brought to light—to have a prying inquisitive finger (to the danger of its own scorching) busied in removing the little peck measure (scripturally a bushel) under which one had hoped to bury his small candle. The receipt of fern-seed, I think, in this curious age, would scarce help a man to walk invisible.

Well, I am discovered—and thou thyself, who thoughtest to shelter under the pease-cod of initiality (a stale and shallow device), art no less dragged to light. Thy slender anatomy—thy skeletonian D——fleshed and sinewed out to the plump expansion of six characters—thy tuneful genealogy deduced.

By the way, what a name is Timothy! Lay it down, I beseech thee, and in its place take up the properer sound of Timotheus.

Then mayst thou with unblushing fingers handle the lyre "familiar to the D——n name."

With much difficulty have I traced thee to thy lurking-place. Many a goodly name did I run over, bewildered between Dorrien, and Doxat, and Dover, and Dakin, and Daintry—a wilderness of D's—till at last I thought I had hit it—my conjectures wandering upon a melancholy Jew—you wot the Israelite upon 'Change—Master Daniels, a contemplative Hebrew, to the which guess I was the rather led by the consideration that most of his nation are great readers.

Nothing is so common as to see them in the Jews' Walk, with a bundle of scrip in one hand and the *Man of Feeling* or a volume of Sterne in the other.

I am a rogue if I can collect what manner of face thou carriest, though thou seemest so familiar with mine. If I remember thou didst not dimly resemble the man Daniels, whom at first I took thee for—a careworn, mortified, economical, commercio-political countenance, with an agreeable limp in thy gait, if Elia mistake thee not. I think I should shake hands with thee, if I met thee.

LETTER CCXXVIII

TO MR. AND MRS. BRUTON

January 6, 1823.

THE pig was above my feeble praise. It was a dear pigmy. There was some contention as to who should have the ears; but, in spite of his obstinacy (deaf as these little creatures are to advice), I contrived to get at one of them.

It came in boots too, which I took as a favour. Generally these pretty toes, pretty toes! are missing; but I suppose he wore them to look taller.

He must have been the least of his race. His little foots would have gone into the silver slipper. I take him to have been a Chinese and a female.

If Evelyn could have seen him, he would never have farrowed two such prodigious volumes; seeing how much good can be contained in—how small a compass!

He crackled delicately.

TO MR. AND MRS. BRUTON

I left a blank at the top of my letter, not being determined which to address it to: so farmer and farmer's wife will please to divide our thanks. May your granaries be full, and your rats empty, and your chickens plump, and your envious neighbours lean, and your labourers busy, and you as idle and as happy as the day is long!

VIVE L'AGRICULTURE!

How do you make your pigs so little?
They are vastly engaging at the age:
I was so myself.
Now I am a disagreeable old hog,
A middle-aged gentleman-and-a-half,
My faculties (thank God!) are not much impaired.

I have my sight, hearing, taste, pretty perfect; and can read the Lord's Prayer in common type, by the help of a candle, without making many mistakes.

Believe me, that while my faculties last, I shall ever cherish a proper appreciation of your many kindnesses in this way, and that the last lingering relish of past favours upon my dying memory will be the smack of that little ear. It was the left ear, which is lucky. Many happy returns, not of the pig, but of the New Year, to both! Mary, for her share of the pig and the memoirs, desires to send the same.

Yours truly, C. LAMB.

LETTER CCXXIX

TO BERNARD BARTON

January 9, 1823.

"THROW yourself on the world without any rational plan of support, beyond what the chance employ of booksellers would afford you!!!"

Throw yourself rather, my dear sir, from the steep Tarpeian rock, slap-dash headlong upon iron spikes. If you had but five consolatory minutes between the desk and the bed, make much of them, and live a century in them, rather than turn slave to the booksellers. They are Turks and Tartars when they have poor authors at their beck. Hitherto you have been at arm's length from them. Come not within their grasp. I have known many authors for bread, some repining, others envying the blessed security of a counting-house, all agreeing they would rather have been tailors, weavers,—what not, rather than the things they were. I have known some starved, some to go mad, one dear friend literally dying in a workhouse. You know not what a rapacious, dishonest set these booksellers are. Ask even Southey, who (a single case almost) has made a fortune by book drudgery, what he has found them. Oh, you know not (may you never know!) the miseries of subsisting by authorship. 'T is a pretty appendage to a situation like yours or mine; but a slavery, worse than all slavery, to be a bookseller's dependant, to drudge your brains for pots of ale and breasts of mutton, to

change your free thoughts and voluntary numbers for ungracious task-work. Those fellows hate *us*. The reason I take to be, that contrary to other trades, in which the master gets all the credit (a jeweller or silversmith for instance), and the journeyman, who really does the fine work, is in the background,—in *our* work the world gives all the credit to us, whom *they* consider as *their* journeymen, and therefore do they hate us, and cheat us, and oppress us, and would wring the blood of us out, to put another sixpence in their mechanic pouches! I contend that a bookseller has a *relative honesty* towards authors, not like his honesty to the rest of the world. B., who first engaged me as "Elia," has not paid me up yet (nor any of us without repeated mortifying appeals), yet how the knave fawned when I was of service to him! Yet I dare say the fellow is punctual in settling his milk-score, etc.

Keep to your bank, and the bank will keep you. Trust not to the public; you may hang, starve, drown yourself, for anything that worthy *personage* cares. I bless every star that Providence, not seeing good to make me independent, has seen it next good to settle me upon the stable foundation of Leadenhall. Sit down, good B. B., in the banking-office. What! is there not from six to eleven P.M. six days in the week, and is there not all Sunday? Fie, what a superfluity of man's time, if you could think so!—enough for relaxation, mirth, converse, poetry, good thoughts, quiet thoughts. Oh the corroding, tortur-

ing, tormenting thoughts, that disturb the brain of the unlucky wight who must draw upon it for daily sustenance! Henceforth I retract all my fond complaints of mercantile employment; look upon them as lovers' quarrels. I was but half in earnest. Welcome dead timber of a desk, that makes me live. A little grumbling is a wholesome medicine for the spleen; but in my inner heart do I approve and embrace this our close but unharassing way of life. I am quite serious. If you can send me Fox, I will not keep it *six weeks*, and will return it, with warm thanks to yourself and friend, without blot or dog's ear. You will much oblige me by this kindness.

Yours truly, C. LAMB.

LETTER CCXXX

TO J. HOWARD PAYNE

January 23, '23.

DEAR PAYNE—I have no mornings (my day begins at 5 P.M.) to transact business in, or talents for it, so I employ Mary, who has seen Robertson, who says that the Piece which is to be Operafied was sent to you six weeks since by a Mr. Hunter, whose journey has been delayed, but he supposes you have it by this time. On receiving it back properly done, the rest of your dues will be forthcoming. You have received £30 from Harwood, I hope? Bishop was at the theatre when Mary called, and he has put your other piece into C. Kemble's

hands (the piece you talk of offering Elliston) and C. K. sent down word that he had not yet had time to read it. So stand your affairs at present. Glossop has got the "Murderer." Will you address him on the subject, or shall I—that is, Mary? She says you must write more *showable* letters about these matters, for, with all our trouble of crossing out this word, and giving a cleaner turn to th' other, and folding down at this part, and squeezing an obnoxious epithet into a corner, she can hardly communicate their contents without offence. What, man, put less gall in your ink, or write me a biting tragedy!

C. LAMB.

LETTER CCXXXI

TO BERNARD BARTON

February 17, 1823.

MY DEAR SIR—I have read quite through the ponderous folio of George Fox. I think Sewell has been judicious in omitting certain parts, as for instance where G. F. *has* revealed to him the natures of all the creatures in their names, as Adam had. He luckily turns aside from that compendious study of natural history, which might have superseded Buffon, to his proper spiritual pursuits, only just hinting what a philosopher he might have been. The ominous passage is near the beginning of the book. It is clear he means a physical knowledge, without trope or figure. Also, pretences to miracu-

lous healing, and the like, are more frequent than I should have suspected from the epitome in Sewell. He is nevertheless a great spiritual man, and I feel very much obliged by your procuring me the loan of it. How I like the Quaker phrases!—though I think they were hardly completed till Woolman. A pretty little manual of Quaker language (with an endeavour to explain them) might be gathered out of his book. Could not you do it? I have read through G. F. without finding any explanation of the term *first volume* in the title-page. It takes in all, both his life and his death. Are there more last words of him? Pray how may I return it to Mr. Sewell at Ipswich? I fear to send such a treasure by a stage-coach; not that I am afraid of the coachman or the guard's *reading it;* but it might be lost. Can you put me in a way of sending it in safety? The kind-hearted owner trusted it to me for six months; I think I was about as many days in getting through it, and I do not think that I skipped a word of it. I have quoted G. F. in my "Quaker's Meeting," as having said he was "lifted up in spirit" (which I felt at the time to be not a Quaker phrase), "and the judge and jury were as dead men under his feet." I find no such words in his journal, and I did not get them from Sewell, and the latter sentence I am sure I did not mean to invent: I must have put some other Quaker's words into his mouth. Is it a fatality in me, that everything I touch turns into "a lie"? I once quoted two lines from a translation of Dante,

which Hazlitt very greatly admired, and quoted in a book as proof of the stupendous power of that poet; but no such lines are to be found in the translation, which has been searched for the purpose. I must have dreamed them, for I am quite certain I did not forge them knowingly. What a misfortune to have a lying memory! Yes, I have seen Miss Coleridge, and wish I had just such a—daughter. God love her! To think she should have had to toil through five octavos of that cursed (I forget I write to a Quaker) Abbeypony History, and then to abridge them to three, and all for £113!—at her years to be doing stupid Jesuits' Latin into English, when she should be reading or writing romances! Heaven send her uncle do not breed her up a Quarterly Reviewer! which reminds me that he has spoken very respectfully of you in the last Number, which is the next thing to having a Review all to one's self. Your description of Mr. Mitford's place makes me long for a pippin and some caraways, and a cup of sack in his orchard, when the sweets of the night come in.

Farewell, C. LAMB.

LETTER CCXXXII

TO J. HOWARD PAYNE

February 1823.

MY DEAR MISS LAMB—I have enclosed for you Mr. Payne's piece called "Grandpapa," which

I regret to say is not thought to be of the nature that will suit this theatre; but as there appears to be much merit in it, Mr. Kemble strongly recommends that you should send it to the English Opera House, for which it seems to be excellently adapted. As you have already been kind enough to be our medium of communication with Mr. Payne, I have imposed this trouble upon you; but if you do not like to act for Mr. Payne in the business, and have no means of disposing of the piece, I will forward it to Paris or elsewhere as you think he may prefer.

Very truly yours, HENRY ROBERTSON.

T. R. C. G., Feb. 8, 1823.

DEAR P—— We have just received the above, and want your instructions. It strikes me as a very merry little piece, that should be played by *very young actors*. It strikes me that Miss Clara Fisher would play the *boy* exactly. She is just such a forward chit. No young *man* would do it without its appearing absurd, but in a girl's hands it would have just all the reality that a short drama of an act requires. Then for the sister, if Miss Stevenson that was were Miss Stevenson and younger, they two would carry it off. I do not know who they have got in that young line, besides Miss C. F., at Drury, nor how you would like Elliston to have it—has he not had it? I am thick with Arnold, but I have always heard that the very slender profits of the English Opera House do not admit of his giving above

a trifle, or next to none, for a piece of this kind. Write me what I should do, what you would ask, etc. The music (printed) is returned with the piece, and the French original. Tell Mr. Grattan I thank him for his book, which as far as I have read it is a very *companionable one.* I have but just received it. It came the same hour with your packet from Cov. Gar., *i.e.* yester-night late, to my summer residence, where, tell Kenney, the cow is quiet. Love to all at Versailles. Write quickly. C. L.

I have no acquaintance with Kemble at all, having only met him once or twice; but any information, etc., I can get from R., who is a good fellow, you may command. I am sorry the rogues are so dilatory, but I distinctly believe they mean to fulfil their engagement. I am sorry you are not here to see to these things. I am a poor man of business, but command me to the short extent of my tether. My sister's kind remembrance ever. C. L.

LETTER CCXXXIII

TO WALTER WILSON

February 24, 1823.

DEAR W.—I write that you may not think me neglectful, not that I have anything to say. In answer to your questions, it was at your house I saw an edition of "Roxana," the preface to which stated

that the author had left out that part of it which related to Roxana's daughter persisting in imagining herself to be so, in spite of the mother's denial, from certain hints she had picked up, and throwing herself continually in her mother's way (as Savage is said to have done in his, prying in at windows to get a glimpse of her), and that it was by advice of Southern, who objected to the circumstances as being untrue, when the rest of the story was founded on fact; which shows S. to have been a stupid-ish fellow. The incidents so resemble Savage's story, that I taxed Godwin with taking Falkner from his life by Dr. Johnson. You should have the edition (if you have not parted with it), for I saw it never but at your place at the Mews' Gate, nor did I then read it to compare it with my own; only I know the daughter's curiosity is the best part of *my* "Roxana." The prologue you speak of was mine, and so named, but not worth much. You ask me for two or three pages of verse. I have not written so much since you knew me. I am altogether prosaic. May be I may touch off a sonnet in time. I do not prefer "Colonel Jack" to either "Robinson Crusoe" or "Roxana." I only spoke of the beginning of it, his childish history. The rest is poor. I do not know anywhere any good character of De Foe besides what you mention. I do not know that Swift mentions him; Pope does. I forget if D'Israeli has. Dunlop I think has nothing of him. He is quite new ground, and scarce known beyond "Crusoe." I do not know who wrote "Quarl."

I never thought of "Quarl" as having an author. It is a poor imitation; the monkey is the best in it, and his pretty dishes made of shells. Do you know the paper in the *Englishman* by Sir Richard Steele, giving an account of Selkirk? It is admirable, and has all the germs of "Crusoe." You must quote it entire. Captain G. Carleton wrote his own Memoirs; they are about Lord Peterborough's campaign in Spain, and a good book. "Puzzelli" puzzles me, and I am in a cloud about "Donald M'Leod." I never heard of them; so you see, my dear Wilson, what poor assistances I can give in the way of information. I wish your book out, for I shall like to see anything about De Foe, or from you.

Your old friend, C. Lamb.

From my and your old compound.

LETTER CCXXXIV

TO BERNARD BARTON

March 5, 1823.

Dear Sir—You must think me ill-mannered not to have replied to your first letter sooner, but I have an ugly habit of aversion from letter writing, which makes me an unworthy correspondent. I have had no spring, or cordial call to the occupation of late. I have been not well lately, which must be my lame excuse. Your Poem, which I consider very affecting, found me engaged about a humorous Paper

for the *London*, which I had called "A Letter to an *Old Gentleman* whose education had been neglected"—and when it was done Taylor and Hessey would not print it, and it discouraged me from doing anything else; so I took up Scott, where I had scribbled some petulant remarks, and for a make-shift father'd them on Ritson. It is obvious I could not make your Poem a part of them; and as I did not know whether I should ever be able to do to my mind what you suggested, I thought it not fair to keep back the verses for the chance. Mr. Mitford's Sonnet I like very well; but as I also have my reasons against interfering at all with the Editorial arrangement of the *London*, I transmitted it (not in my own handwriting) to them, who I doubt not will be glad to insert it. What eventual benefit it can be to you (otherwise than that a kind man's wish is a benefit) I cannot conjecture. Your Society are eminently men of business, and will probably regard you as an idle fellow, possibly disown you; that is to say, if you had put your own name to a Sonnet of that sort; but they cannot excommunicate Mr. Mitford; therefore I thoroughly approve of printing the said verses. When I see any Quaker names to the Concert of Ancient Music, or as Directors of the British Institution, or bequeathing medals to Oxford for the best classical themes, etc., then I shall begin to hope they will emancipate you. But what as a Society can they do for you? You would not accept a commission in the army, nor they be likely to pro-

cure it. Posts in Church or State have they none in their giving; and then, if they disown you,—think —you must live "a man forbid."

I wished for you yesterday. I dined in Parnassus, with Wordsworth, Coleridge, Rogers, and Tom Moore,—half the poetry of England constellated and clustered in Gloucester Place! It was a delightful evening. Coleridge was in his finest vein of talk —had all the talk; and let 'em talk as evilly as they do of the envy of poets, I am sure not one there but was content to be nothing but a listener. The Muses were dumb while Apollo lectured on his and their fine art. It is a lie that poets are envious. I have known the best of them, and can speak to it, that they give each other their merits, and are the kindest critics as well as best authors. I am scribbling a muddy epistle with an aching head, for we did not quaff Hippocrene last night; marry, it was Hippocrass rather. Pray accept this as a letter in the meantime, and do me the favour to mention my respects to Mr. Mitford, who is so good as to entertain good thoughts of Elia, but don't show this almost impertinent scrawl. I will write more respectfully next time, for believe me, if not in words, in feelings yours most so, C. L.

LETTER CCXXXV

March 11, 1823.

DEAR SIR—The approbation of my little book by your sister is very pleasing to me. The

Quaker incident did not happen to me, but to Carlisle the surgeon, from whose mouth I have twice heard it, at an interval of ten or twelve years, with little or no variation, and have given it as exactly as I could remember it. The gloss which your sister or you have put upon it does not strike me as correct. Carlisle drew no inference from it against the honesty of the Quakers, but only in favour of their surpassing coolness; that they should be capable of committing a good joke, with an utter insensibility to its being any jest at all. I have reason to believe in the truth of it, because, as I have said, I heard him repeat it without variation at such an interval. The story loses sadly in print, for Carlisle is the best story-teller I ever heard. The idea of the discovery of roasting pigs I also borrowed, from my friend Manning, and am willing to confess both my plagiarisms. Should fate ever so order it that you shall be in town with your sister, mine bids me say, that she shall have great pleasure in being introduced to her. I think I must give up the cause of the Bank; from 9 to 9 is galley slavery, but I hope it is but temporary. Your endeavour at explaining Fox's insight into the natures of animals must fail, as I shall transcribe the passage. It appears to me that he stopt short in time, and was on the brink of falling with his friend Naylor, my favourite. The book shall be forthcoming whenever your friend can make convenient to call for it.

They have dragged me again into the Magazine,

but I feel the spirit of the thing in my own mind quite gone. "Some brains" (I think Ben Jonson says it) "will endure but one skimming." We are about to have an inundation of poetry from the Lakes: Wordsworth and Southey are coming up strong from the North. The She Coleridges have taken flight, to my regret. With Sara's own-made acquisitions, her unaffectedness and no-pretensions are beautiful. You might pass an age with her without suspecting that she knew anything but her mother's tongue. I don't mean any reflections on Mrs. Coleridge here. I had better have said her vernacular idiom. Poor C., I wish he had a home to receive his daughter in; but he is but as a stranger or a visitor in this world.

How did you like Hartley's sonnets? The first, at least, is vastly fine. I am ashamed of the shabby letters I send, but I am by nature anything but neat. Therein my mother bore me no Quaker. I never could seal a letter without dropping the wax on one side, besides scalding my fingers. I never had a seal, too, of my own. Writing to a great man lately, who is moreover very heraldic, I borrowed a seal of a friend, who by the female side quarters the Protectorial arms of Cromwell. How they must have puzzled my correspondent! My letters are generally charged as double at the Post Office, from their inveterate clumsiness of foldure; so you must not take it disrespectful to yourself if I send you such ungainly scraps. I think I lose £100 a year at the India House, owing solely to my want of neatness in mak-

ing up accounts. How I puzzle 'em out at last is the wonder. I have to do with millions! !

It is time to have done my incoherences.

Believe me, yours truly, C. LAMB.

LETTER CCXXXVI

TO J. HOWARD PAYNE

1823.

DEAR PAYNE—Your little books are most acceptable. 'Tis a delicate edition. They are gone to the binder's. When they come home I shall have two—the "Camp" and "Patrick's Day"—to read for the first time. I may say three, for I never read the "School for Scandal." "*Seen* it I have, and in its happier days." With the books Harwood left a truncheon or mathematical instrument, of which we have not yet ascertained the use. It is like a telescope, but unglazed. Or a ruler, but not smooth enough. It opens like a fan, and discovers a frame such as they weave lace upon at Lyons and Chambery. Possibly it is from those parts. I do not value the present the less for not being quite able to detect its purport. When I can find any one coming your way I have a volume for you, my Elias collected. Tell Poole, his Cockney in the Lon. Mag. tickled me exceedingly. Harwood is to be with us this evening with Fanny, who comes to introduce a literary lady, who wants to see me,—and whose portentous name is *Plura*, in English, "many things."

Now, of all God's creatures, I detest letters-affecting, authors-hunting ladies. But Fanny "will have it so." So Miss Many-Things and I are to have a conference, of which you shall have the result. I dare say she does not play at whist. Treasurer Robertson, whose coffers are absolutely swelling with pantomimic receipts, called on me yesterday to say he is going to write to you, but if I were also, I might as well say that your last bill is at the Banker's, and will be honored on the instant receipt of the third Piece, which you have stipulated for. If you have any such in readiness, strike while the iron is hot, before the Clown cools. Tell Mrs. Kenney, that the Miss F. H. (or H. F.) Kelly, who has begun so splendidly in Juliet, is the identical little Fanny Kelly, who used to play on their green before their great Lying-Inn Lodgings at Bayswater. Her career has stopt short by the injudicious bringing her out in a vile new Tragedy, and for a third character in a stupid old one,—the "Earl of Essex." This is Macready's doing, who taught her. Her recitation, etc. (*not her voice or person*), is masculine. It is so clever, it seemed a male *Debût*. But cleverness is the bane of Female Tragedy especially. Passions uttered logically, etc. It is bad enough in men-actors. Could you do nothing for little Clara Fisher? Are there no French Pieces with a Child in them? By Pieces I mean here dramas, to prevent male-constructions. Did not the Blue Girl remind you of some of Congreve's women? Angelica or Millamant?

To me she was a vision of Genteel Comedy realised. Those kind of people never come to see one. *N'importe*—haven't I Miss Many-Things coming? Will you ask Horace Smith to—— [*The remainder of this letter has been lost.*]

LETTER CCXXXVII

1823.

DEAR PAYNE—A friend and fellow-clerk of mine, Mr. White (a good fellow), coming to your parts, I would fain have accompanied him, but am forced instead to send a part of me, verse and prose, most of it from 20 to 30 years old, such as I then was, and I am not much altered.

Paris, which I hardly knew whether I liked when I was in it, is an object of no small magnitude with me now. I want to be going to the Jardin des Plantes (is that right, Louisa?) with you—to Pere la Chaise, La Morgue, and all the sentimentalities. How is Talma, and his (my) dear Shakspeare?

N. B.—My friend White knows Paris thoroughly, and does not want a guide. We did, and had one. We both join in thanks. Do you remember a Blue-Silk Girl (English) at the Luxembourg, that did not much seem to attend to the Pictures, who fell in love with you, and whom I fell in love with—an inquisitive, prying, curious Beauty—where is she?

Votre Très Humble Serviteur,

CHARLOIS AGNEAU,
alias C. LAMB.

Guichy is well, and much as usual. He seems blind to all the distinctions of life, except to those of sex. Remembrance to Kenney and Poole.

LETTER CCXXXVIII

TO B. W. PROCTER

April 13, 1823.

DEAR LAD—You must think me a brute beast, a rhinoceros, never to have acknowledged the receipt of your precious present. But indeed I am none of those shocking things, but have arrived at that indisposition to letter-writing which would make it a hard exertion to write three lines to a king to spare a friend's life: whether it is that the Magazine paying me so much a page I am loath to throw away composition. How much a sheet do you give your correspondents? I have hung up Pope, and a gem it is, in my town room; I hope for your approval. Though it accompanies the *Essay on Man*, I think that was not the poem he is here meditating. He would have looked up, somehow affectedly, if he were just conceiving "Awake, my St. John." Neither is he in the *Rape of the Lock* mood exactly. I think he has just made out the last lines of the "Epistle to Jervis," between gay and tender,

"And other beauties envy Worsley's eyes."

I 'll be d . . . 'd if that is n't the line. He is brooding over it, with a dreamy phantom of Lady Mary

floating before him. He is thinking which is the earliest possible day and hour that she will first see it. What a miniature piece of gentility it is! Why did you give it me? I do not like you enough to give you anything so good.

I have dined with T. Moore and breakfasted with Rogers, since I saw you; have much to say about them when we meet, which I trust will be in a week or two. I have been over-watched and over-poeted since Wordsworth has been in town. I was obliged for health's sake to wish him gone, but now he is gone I feel a great loss. I am going to Dalston to recruit, and have serious thoughts of altering my condition, that is, of taking to sobriety. What do you advise me?

Rogers spake very kindly of you, as everybody does, and none with so much reason as your

C. L.

LETTER CCXXXIX

TO MISS HUTCHINSON

April 25, 1823.

DEAR Miss H.—Mary has such an invincible reluctance to any epistolary exertion, that I am sparing her a mortification by taking the pen from her. The plain truth is, she writes such a pimping, mean, detestable hand, that she is ashamed of the formation of her letters. There is an essential poverty and abjectness in the frame of them. They look like begging letters. And then she is sure to omit a most substantial word in the second draught (for

she never ventures an epistle without a foul copy first), which is obliged to be interlined; which spoils the neatest epistle, you know. Her figures, 1, 2, 3, 4, etc., where she has occasion to express numerals, as in the date (25th April 1823), are not figures, but figurantes; and the combined posse go staggering up and down shameless, as drunkards in the day-time. It is no better when she rules her paper. Her lines "are not less erring" than her words. A sort of unnatural parallel lines, that are perpetually threatening to meet; which, you know, is quite contrary to Euclid. Her very blots are not bold like this [*here a large blot is inserted*], but poor smears, half left in and half scratched out, with another smear left in their place. I like a clear letter; a bold free hand, and a fearless flourish. Then she has always to go through them (a second operation) to dot her *i*'s and cross her *t*'s. I don't think she can make a corkscrew if she tried, which has such a fine effect at the end or middle of an epistle, and fills up.

There is a corkscrew!—one of the best I ever drew. By the way, what incomparable whisky that was of Monkhouse's! But if I am to write a letter, let me begin, and not stand flourishing, like a fencer at a fair.

April 25, 1823.

DEAR Miss H.—It gives me great pleasure (the letter now begins) to hear that you got down so smoothly, and that Mrs. Monkhouse's spirits are

so good and enterprising. It shows, whatever her posture may be, that her mind at least is not supine. I hope the excursion will enable the former to keep pace with its outstripping neighbour. Pray present our kindest wishes to her and all (that sentence should properly have come into the Postscript, but we airy mercurial spirits, there is no keeping us in). "Time" (as was said of one of us) "toils after us in vain." I am afraid our co-visit with Coleridge was a dream. I shall not get away before the end (or middle) of June, and then you will be frog-hopping at Boulogne; and besides, I think the Gillmans would scarce trust him with us; I have a malicious knack at cutting of apron-strings. The Saints' days you speak of have long since fled to heaven, with Astræa, and the cold piety of the age lacks fervour to recall them; only Peter left his key—the iron one of the two that "shuts amain"—and that is the reason I am locked up. Meanwhile of afternoons we pick up primroses at Dalston, and Mary corrects me when I call 'em cow-slips. God bless you all; and pray remember me euphoniously to Mr. Gruvellegan. That Lee Priory must be a dainty bower. Is it built of flints? —and does it stand at Kingsgate?

TO BARTON

LETTER CCXL

TO BERNARD BARTON

May 3, 1823.

DEAR SIR—I am vexed to be two letters in your debt, but I have been quite out of the vein lately. A philosophical treatise is wanting, of the causes of the backwardness with which persons after a certain time of life set about writing a letter. I always feel as if I had nothing to say, and the performance generally justifies the presentiment. Taylor and Hessey did foolishly in not admitting the sonnet. Surely it might have followed the B. B. I agree with you in thinking Bowring's paper better than the former. I will inquire about my letter to the old gentleman, but I expect it to *go in*, after those to the young gentleman are completed.

I do not exactly see why the goose and little goslings should emblematise *a Quaker poet that has no children*. But, after all, perhaps it is a pelican. The "Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin" around it I cannot decipher. The songster of the night pouring out her effusions amid a silent meeting of madge-owlets, would be at least intelligible. A full pause here comes upon me, as if I had not a word more left. I will shake my brain, Once! Twice!—nothing comes up. George Fox recommends waiting on these occasions. I wait. Nothing comes. G. Fox—that sets me off again. I have finished the "Journal," and 400 more pages of the "*Doctrinals*," which I picked up for

7s. 6d. If I get on at this rate, the society will be in danger of having two Quaker poets to patronise. I am at Dalston now; but if when I go back to Covent Garden I find thy friend has not called for the "Journal," thee must put me in the way of sending it; and if it should happen the lender of it, knowing that volume, has not the other, I shall be most happy in his accepting the "*Doctrinals*," which I shall read but once certainly. It is not a splendid copy, but perfect, save a leaf of Index.

I cannot but think that the *London* drags heavily. I miss Janus. And oh how it misses Hazlitt! Procter too is affronted.

Believe me cordially yours, C. LAMB.

LETTER CCXLI

TO J. B. DIBDIN

May 6, 1823.

DEAR SIR—Your verses were very pleasant, and I shall like to see more of them—I do not mean *addressed to me.*

I do not know whether you live in town or country, but if it suits your convenience I shall be glad to see you some evening—say Thursday—at 20 Great Russell Street, Covent Garden. If you can come do not trouble yourself to write. We are old-fashioned people who *drink tea* at six, or not much later, and give cold mutton and pickle at nine, the

good old hour. I assure you (if it suit you) we shall be glad to see you.

Yours, etc. C. Lamb.

My love to Mr. Railton, the same to Mr. Rankin, to the whole Firm indeed.

E. I. H., Tuesday,
Some day of May 1823.
Not official.

LETTER CCXLII

TO WILLIAM HONE

E. I. H., May 19, '23.

Dear Sir—I have been very agreeably entertained with your present, which I found very curious and amusing. What wiseacres our forefathers appear to have been! It should make *us* thankful, who are grown so rational and polite. I should call to thank you for the book, but go home to Dalston at present. I shall beg your acceptance (when I see you) of my little book. I have Ray's *Collections of English Words not generally Used*, 1691; and in page 60 ("North Country words") occurs "*Rynt ye*" —"by your leave," "stand handsomely." As, "Rynt you, witch," quoth Besse Locket to her mother; Proverb, Cheshire.—Doubtless this is the "Aroint" of Shakspeare.

In the same collection I find several Shakspearisms. "Rooky" wood: a Northern word for "reeky,"

"misty," etc. "Shandy," a north country word for "wild." Sterne was York.

Yours obliged, C. Lamb.

I am at 14, Kingsland Row, Dalston. Will you take a walk over on Sunday? We dine exactly at 4, and shall be most glad to see you. If I don't hear from you (by note to E. I. Ho.) I will expect you.

Mr. Hone, 45, Ludgate Hill.

LETTER CCXLIII

TO CHARLES LLOYD

1823.

YOUR lines are not to be understood reading on one leg. They are sinuous, and to be won with wrestling. I do assure you in sincerity that nothing you have done has given me greater satisfaction. Your obscurity, where you are dark, which is seldom, is that of too much meaning, not the painful obscurity which no toil of the reader can dissipate; not the dead vacuum and floundering place in which imagination finds no footing: it is not the dimness of positive darkness, but of distance; and he that reads and not discerns must get a better pair of spectacles. I admire every piece in the collection. I cannot say the first is best: when I do so, the last read rises up in judgment. To your Mother, to your Sister (is Mary dead?), they are all weighty with thought and tender with sentiment. Your poetry is

like no other. Those cursed dryads and pagan trumperies of modern verse have put me out of conceit of the very name of poetry. Your verses are as good and as wholesome as prose, and I have made a sad blunder if I do not leave you with an impression that your present is rarely valued.

CHARLES LAMB.

LETTER CCXLIV

TO BERNARD BARTON

July 10, 1823.

DEAR SIR—I shall be happy to read the MS. and to forward it; but T[aylor] and H[essey] must judge for themselves of publication. If it prove interesting (as I doubt not) I shall not spare to say so, you may depend upon it. Suppose you direct it to Accountant's Office, India House. I am glad you have met with some sweetening circumstances to your unpalatable draught. I have just returned from Hastings, where are exquisite views and walks, and where I have given up my soul to walking, and I am now suffering sedentary contrasts. I am a long time reconciling to town after one of these excursions. Home is become strange, and will remain so yet a while; home is the most unforgiving of friends, and always resents absence; I know its old cordial looks will return, but they are slow in clearing up. That is one of the features of this *our* galley slavery; that peregrination ended makes things worse. I felt

out of water (with all the sea about me) at Hastings; and just as I had learned to domiciliate there, I must come back to find a home which is no home. I abused Hastings, but learned its value. There are spots, inland bays, etc., which realise the notions of Juan Fernandez. The best thing I lit upon by accident was a small country church (by whom or when built unknown), standing bare and single in the midst of a grove, with no house or appearance of habitation within a quarter of a mile, only passages diverging from it through beautiful woods to so many farmhouses. There it stands like the first idea of a church, before parishioners were thought of, nothing but birds for its congregation; or like a hermit's oratory (the hermit dead), or a mausoleum; its effect singularly impressive, like a church found in a desert isle to startle Crusoe with a home image. You must make out a vicar and a congregation from fancy, for surely none come there; yet it wants not its pulpit, and its font, and all the seemly additaments of *our* worship.

Southey has attacked "Elia" on the score of infidelity, in the *Quarterly* article, "Progress of Infidelity." I had not, nor have seen the *Monthly*. He might have spared an old friend such a construction of a few careless flights, that meant no harm to religion. If all *his* unguarded expressions on the subject were to be collected——! But I love and respect Southey, and will not retort. I hate his review, and his being a reviewer. The hint he has dropped will

knock the sale of the book on the head, which was almost at a stop before. Let it stop,—there is corn in Egypt, while there is cash at Leadenhall. You and I are something besides being writers, thank God!

Yours truly, C. L.

LETTER CCXLV

TO THOMAS ALLSOP

E. I. House, August 9, 1823.

MY DEAR A.—I am going to ask you to do me the greatest favour which a man can do for another. I want to make my will, and to leave my property in trust for my Sister. *N. B.*—I am not therefore going to die.—Would it be unpleasant for you to be named for one? The other two I shall beg the same favour of are Talfourd and Procter. If you feel reluctant, tell me, and it shan't abate one jot of my friendly feeling toward you.

Yours ever, C. LAMB.

LETTER CCXLVI

TO BERNARD BARTON

September 2, 1823.

DEAR B. B.—What will you say to my not writing? You cannot say I do not write now. Hessey has not used your kind sonnet, nor have I seen it. Pray send me a copy. Neither have I heard

any more of your friend's MS., which I will reclaim whenever you please. When you come London-ward you will find me no longer in Covent Garden. I have a cottage in Colebrook Row, Islington; a cottage, for it is detached; a white house, with six good rooms; the New River (rather elderly by this time) runs (if a moderate walking pace may be so termed) close to the foot of the house; and behind is a spacious garden with vines (I assure you), pears, strawberries, parsnips, leeks, carrots, cabbages, to delight the heart of old Alcinous. You enter without passage into a cheerful dining-room, all studded over and rough with old books: and above is a lightsome drawing-room, three windows, full of choice prints. I feel like a great lord, never having had a house before.

The *London*, I fear, falls off. I linger among its creaking rafters, like the last rat; it will topple down if they don't get some buttresses. They have pulled down three: Hazlitt, Procter, and their best stay, kind, light-hearted Wainwright, their Janus. The best is, neither of our fortunes is concerned in it.

I heard of you from Mr. Pulham this morning, and that gave a fillip to my laziness, which has been intolerable; but I am so taken up with pruning and gardening, quite a new sort of occupation to me. I have gathered my jargonels, but my Windsor pears are backward. The former were of exquisite raciness. I do now sit under my own vine, and contemplate the growth of vegetable nature. I can now understand in what sense they speak of father Adam. I

recognise the paternity while I watch my tulips. I almost fell with him, for the first day I turned a drunken gardener (as he let in the serpent) into my Eden, and he laid about him, lopping off some choice boughs, etc., which hung over from a neighbour's garden, and in his blind zeal laid waste a shade, which had sheltered their window from the gaze of passers-by. The old gentlewoman (fury made her not handsome) could scarcely be reconciled by all my fine words. There was no buttering her parsnips. She talked of the law. What a lapse to commit on the first day of my happy "garden-state"!

I hope you transmitted the Fox-Journal to its owner, with suitable thanks. Mr. Cary, the Dante-man, dines with me to-day. He is a model of a country parson, lean (as a curate ought to be), modest, sensible, no obtruder of church dogmas, quite a different man from Southey. You would like him. Pray accept this for a letter, and believe me, with sincere regards,

Yours, C. L.

LETTER CCXLVII

TO THOMAS HOOD

[Late in 1823.]

AND what dost thou at the Priory? *Cucullus non facit Monachum.* English me that, and challenge old Lignum Janua to make a better.

My old New River has presented no extraordinary novelties lately; but there Hope sits every day,

speculating upon traditionary gudgeons. I think she has taken the fisheries. I now know the reason why our forefathers were denominated East and West Angles. Yet is there no lack of spawn; for I wash my hands in fishets that come through the pump every morning thick as motelings,—little things that perish untimely, and never taste the brook. You do not tell me of those romantic land bays that be as thou goest to Lover's Seat: neither of that little churchling in the midst of a wood (in the opposite direction, nine furlongs from the town), that seems dropped by the Angel that was tired of carrying two packages; marry, with the other he made shift to pick his flight to Loretto. Inquire out, and see my little Protestant Loretto. It stands apart from trace of human habitation; yet hath it pulpit, reading-desk, and trim font of massiest marble, as if Robinson Crusoe had reared it to soothe himself with old church-going images. I forget its Christian name, and what she-saint was its gossip.

You should also go to No. 13, Standgate Street,—a baker, who has the finest collection of marine monsters in ten sea counties,—sea dragons, polypi, mer-people, most fantastic. You have only to name the old gentleman in black (not the Devil) that lodged with him a week (he 'll remember) last July, and he will show courtesy. He is by far the foremost of the savans. His wife is the funniest thwarting little animal! They are decidedly the Lions of green Hastings. Well, I have made an end of my say. My

epistolary time is gone by when I could have scribbled as long (I will not say as agreeable) as thine was to both of us. I am dwindled to notes and letterets. But, in good earnest, I shall be most happy to hail thy return to the waters of Old Sir Hugh. There is nothing like inland murmurs, fresh ripples, and our native minnows.

> "He sang in meads how sweet the brooklets ran,
> To the rough ocean and red restless sands."

I design to give up smoking; but I have not yet fixed upon the equivalent vice. I must have *quid pro quo;* or *quo pro quid,* as Tom Woodgate would correct me. My service to him.

C. L.

LETTER CCXLVIII

TO THOMAS ALLSOP

September 10, 1823.

MY DEAR A.—Your kindness in accepting my request no words of mine can repay. It has made you overflow into some romance which I should have check'd at another time. I hope it may be in the scheme of Providence that my sister may go first (if ever so little a precedence), myself next, and my good Executors survive to remember us with kindness many years. God bless you.

I will set Procter about the will forthwith.

C. LAMB.

LETTER CCXLIX

TO BERNARD BARTON

September 17, 1823.

DEAR SIR—I have again been reading your "Stanzas on Bloomfield," which are the most appropriate that can be imagined,—sweet with Doric delicacy. I like that,—

> "Our own more chaste Theocritus"—

just hinting at the fault of the Grecian. I love that stanza ending with,

> "Words, phrases, fashions, pass away;
> But truth and nature live through all."

But I shall omit in my own copy the one stanza which alludes to Lord B. I suppose. It spoils the sweetness and oneness of the feeling. Cannot we think of Burns, or Thomson, without sullying the thought with a reflection out of place upon Lord Rochester? These verses might have been inscribed upon a tomb; are in fact an epitaph; satire does not look pretty upon a tombstone. Besides, there is a quotation in it, always bad in verse, seldom advisable in prose. I doubt if their having been in a paper will not prevent T. and H. from insertion; but I shall have a thing to send in a day or two, and shall try them. Omitting that stanza, a very little alteration is wanting in the beginning of the next.

You see, I use freedom. How happily (I flatter not) you have brought in his subjects; and (I suppose) his favourite measure, though I am not acquainted with any of his writings but the *Farmer's Boy*. He dined with me once, and his manners took me exceedingly.

I rejoice that you forgive my long silence. I continue to estimate my own-roof comforts highly. How could I remain all my life a lodger! My garden thrives (I am told), though I have yet reaped nothing but some tiny salad and withered carrots. But a garden 's a garden anywhere, and twice a garden in London.

Somehow I cannot relish that word "Horkey." Cannot you supply it by circumlocution, and direct the reader by a note to explain that it means the Horkey. But Horkey chokes me in the text. It raises crowds of mean associations, hawking and sp——g, gawky, stalky, mawkin! The sound is everything, in such dulcet modulations 'specially. I like

"Gilbert Meldrum's sterner tones,"

without knowing who Gilbert Meldrum is. You have slipt in your rhymes as if they grew there, so natural-artificially, or artificial-naturally. There 's a vile phrase!

Do you go on with your "Quaker Sonnets"? Have 'em ready with Southey's "Book of the Church." I meditate a letter to S. in the *London*, which perhaps will meet the fate of the Sonnet.

Excuse my brevity, for I write painfully at office, liable to a hundred callings off; and I can never sit down to an epistle elsewhere. I read or walk. If you return this letter to the Post Office, I think they will return fourpence, seeing it is but half a one. Believe me, though,

Entirely yours, C. L.

LETTER CCL

TO THOMAS ALLSOP

1823.

DEAR A.—Your Cheese is the best I ever tasted; Mary will tell you so hereafter. She is at home, but has disappointed me. She has gone back rather than improved. However, she has sense enough to value the present; for she is greatly fond of Stilton. Yours is the delicatest, rainbow-hued, melting piece I ever flavoured. Believe me, I took it the more kindly, following so great a kindness.

Depend upon 't, yours shall be one of the first houses we shall present ourselves at, when we have got our Bill of Health.

Being both yours and Mrs. Allsop's truly,

C. L. and M. L.

TO CARY—DIBDIN

LETTER CCLI

TO REV. H. F. CARY

India Office, October 14, 1823.

DEAR SIR—If convenient, will you give us house room on Saturday next? I can sleep anywhere. If another Sunday suit you better, pray let me know. We were talking of Roast *Shoulder* of Mutton with onion sauce; but I scorn to prescribe to the hospitalities of mine host.

With respects to Mrs. C., yours truly,

C. LAMB.

LETTER CCLII

TO J. B. DIBDIN

October 28, 1823.

MY DEAR SIR—Your Pig was a *picture* of a pig, and your Picture a pig of a picture. The former was delicious but evanescent, like a hearty fit of mirth, or the crackling of thorns under a pot; but the latter is an *idea*, and abideth. I never before saw swine upon satin. And then that pretty strawy canopy about him! he seems to purr (rather than grunt) his satisfaction. Such a gentlemanlike porker too! Morland's are absolutely clowns to it. Who the deuce painted it? I have ordered a little gilt shrine for it, and mean to wear it for a locket—a shirt-pig.

I admire the pretty toes shrouded in a veil of something, not *mud* but that warm soft consistency

which the dust takes in Elysium after a spring shower—it perfectly engloves him.

I cannot enough thank you and your country friend for the delicate double present—the *utile et decorum.*

(Three times have I attempted to write this sentence and failed, which shows that I am not cut out for a pedant.)

Sir!—as I say to Southey—Will you come and see us at our poor cottage of Colebrook to tea tomorrow evening, as early as six? I have some friends coming at that hour.

The panoply which covered your material pig shall be forthcoming. The pig pictorial with its trappings domesticate with me.

Your greatly obliged

ELIA.

J. B. Dibdin, Esq.,
Messrs. Rankings,
113 Cheapside.

LETTER CCLIII

TO ROBERT SOUTHEY

E. I. H., November 21, 1823.

DEAR SOUTHEY—The kindness of your note has melted away the mist which was upon me. I have been fighting against a shadow. That accursed *Q. R.* had vexed me by a gratuitous speaking, of its own knowledge, that the *Confessions of a D——d* was a genuine description of the state of the writer. Little things, that are not ill-meant, may produce

much ill. *That* might have injured me alive and dead. I am in a public office, and my life is insured. I was prepared for anger, and I thought I saw, in a few obnoxious words, a hard case of repetition directed against me. I wished both magazine and review at the bottom of the sea. I shall be ashamed to see you, and my sister (though innocent) will be still more so; for the folly was done without her knowledge, and has made her uneasy ever since. My guardian angel was absent at that time.

I will muster up courage to see you, however, any day next week (Wednesday excepted). We shall hope that you will bring Edith with you. That will be a second mortification. She will hate to see us; but come and heap embers. We deserve it; I for what I've done, and she for being my sister.

Do come early in the day, by sun-light, that you may see my *Milton.*

I am at Colebrook Cottage, Colebrook Row, Islington: a detached whitish house, close to the New River end of Colebrook Terrace, left hand from Sadler's Wells.

Will you let me know the day before?

Your penitent, C. Lamb.

P. S.—I do not think your handwriting at all like ****'s. I do not think many things I did think.

LETTER CCLIV

TO BERNARD BARTON

November 22, 1828.

DEAR B. B.—I am ashamed at not acknowledging your kind little poem, which I must needs like much; but I protest I thought I had done it at the moment. Is it possible a letter has miscarried? Did you get one in which I sent you an extract from the poems of Lord Stirling? I should wonder if you did, for I sent you none such. There was an incipient lie strangled in the birth. Some people's conscience is so tender! But, in plain truth, I thank you very much for the verses. I have a very kind letter from the Laureate, with a self-invitation to come and shake hands with me. This is truly handsome and noble. 'T is worthy of my old idea of Southey. Shall not I, think you, be covered with a red suffusion?

You are too much apprehensive of your complaint: I know many that are always ailing of it, and live on to a good old age. I know a merry fellow (you partly know him) who, when his medical adviser told him he had drunk away all *that part*, congratulated himself (now his liver was gone) that he should be the longest liver of the two.

The best way in these cases is to keep yourself as ignorant as you can, as ignorant as the world was before Galen, of the entire inner construction of the animal man; not to be conscious of a midriff; to hold

kidneys (save of sheep and swine) to be an agreeable fiction; not to know whereabout the gall grows; to account the circulation of the blood an idle whimsey of Harvey's; to acknowledge no mechanism not visible. For, once fix the seat of your disorder, and your fancies flux into it like bad humours. Those medical gentries choose each his favourite part; one takes the lungs, another the aforesaid liver, and refer to that whatever in the animal economy is amiss. Above all, use exercise, take a little more spirituous liquors, learn to smoke, continue to keep a good conscience, and avoid tampering with hard terms of art —viscosity, scirrhosity, and those bugbears by which simple patients are scared into their graves. Believe the general sense of the mercantile world, which holds that desks are not deadly. It is the mind, good B. B., and not the limbs, that taints by long sitting. Think of the patience of tailors! Think how long the Lord Chancellor sits! Think of the brooding hen! I protest I cannot answer thy sister's kind inquiry; but I judge, I shall put forth no second volume. More praise than buy; and T. and H. are not particularly disposed for martyrs. Thou wilt see a funny passage, and yet a true history, of George Dyer's aquatic incursion in the next *London*. Beware his fate, when thou comest to see me at my Colebrook Cottage. I have filled my little space with my little thoughts. I wish thee ease on thy sofa; but not too much indulgence on it. From my poor desk, thy fellow-sufferer, this bright November, C. L.

LETTER CCLV

TO MRS. HAZLITT

[*November 1823.*]

DEAR Mrs. H.—Sitting down to write a letter is such a painful operation to Mary, that you must accept me as her proxy. You have seen our house. What I now tell you is literally true. Yesterday week George Dyer called upon us, at one o'clock (*bright noonday*), on his way to dine with Mrs. Barbauld at Newington. He sat with Mary about half an hour, and took leave. The maid saw him go out, from her kitchen window, but suddenly losing sight of him, ran up in a fright to Mary. G. D., instead of keeping the slip that leads to the gate, had deliberately, staff in hand, in broad open day, marched into the New River. He had not his spectacles on, and you know his absence. Who helped him out they can hardly tell, but between 'em they got him out, drenched thro' and thro'. A mob collected by that time, and accompanied him in. "Send for the Doctor," they said: and a one-eyed fellow, dirty and drunk, was fetched from the public-house at the end, where it seems he lurks, for the sake of picking up water practice; having formerly had a medal from the Humane Society for some rescue. By his advice the patient was put between blankets; and when I came home at 4 to dinner, I found G. D. a-bed, and raving, light-headed, with the brandy and water which the doctor had administered. He sang, laughed, whim-


Brandy

pered, screamed, babbled of guardian angels, would get up and go home; but we kept him there by force; and by next morning he departed sober, and seems to have received no injury. All my friends are open-mouth'd about having paling before the river; but I cannot see, that because a lunatic chooses to walk into a river with his eyes open at midday, I am any the more likely to be drowned in it, coming home at midnight.

I had the honour of dining at the Mansion House on Thursday last by special card from the Lord Mayor, who never saw my face, nor I his; and all from being a writer in a magazine. The dinner costly, served on massy plate; champagne, pines, etc.; 47 present, among whom the Chairman and two other directors of the India Company.

There's for you! and got away pretty sober. Quite saved my credit.

We continue to like our house prodigiously.

Does Mary Hazlitt go on with her novel? or has she begun another? I would not discourage her, though we continue to think it (so far) in its present state not saleable. Our kind remembrances to her and hers, and you and yours.

Yours truly, C. Lamb.

I am pleased that H. liked my letter to the Laureate.

Mrs. Hazlitt,
Alphington, near Exeter.

LETTER CCLVI

TO MR. AINSWORTH

India House, December 9, 1823.

DEAR SIR—I should have thanked you for your books and compliments sooner, but have been waiting for a revise to be sent, which does not come, though I returned the proof on the receipt of your letter. I have read Warner with great pleasure. What an elaborate piece of alliteration and antithesis! why it must have been a labour far above the most difficult versification. There is a fine simile or picture of Semiramis arming to repel a siege. I do not mean to keep the book, for I suspect you are forming a curious collection, and I do not pretend to anything of the kind. I have not a black-letter book among mine, old Chaucer excepted, and am not bibliomanist enough to like black-letter. It is painful to read; therefore I must insist on returning it at opportunity, not from contumacy and reluctance to be obliged, but because it must suit you better than me. The loss of a present *from* should never exceed the gain of a present *to*. I hold this maxim infallible in the accepting line. I read your magazines with satisfaction. I thoroughly agree with you as to "The German Faust," as far as I can do justice to it from an English translation. 'T is a disagreeable canting tale of seduction, which has nothing to do with the spirit of Faustus—Curiosity. Was the dark secret to be explored to end in the seducing of a weak girl, which

might have been accomplished by earthly agency? When Marlow gives *his* Faustus a mistress, he flies him at Helen, flower of Greece, to be sure, and not at Miss Betsy, or Miss Sally Thoughtless.

> "Cut is the branch that bore the goodly fruit,
> And wither'd is Apollo's laurel tree:
> Faustus is dead."

What a noble natural transition from metaphor to plain speaking! as if the figurative had flagged in description of such a loss, and was reduced to tell the fact simply.

I must now thank you for your very kind invitation. It is not out of prospect that I may see Manchester some day, and then I will avail myself of your kindness. But holidays are scarce things with me, and the laws of attendance are getting stronger and stronger at Leadenhall. But I shall bear it in mind. Meantime something may (more probably) bring you to town, where I shall be happy to see you. I am always to be found (alas!) at my desk in the fore part of the day.

I wonder why they do not send the revise. I leave late at office, and my abode lies out of the way, or I should have seen about it. If you are impatient, perhaps a line to the printer, directing him to send it me, at Accountant's Office, may answer. You will see by the scrawl that I only snatch a few minutes from intermitting business.

Your obliged servant, C. Lamb.

(If I had time I would go over this letter again, and dot all my *i*'s.)

LETTER CCLVII

I. H., December 29, 1823.

MY DEAR SIR—You talk of months at a time, and I know not what inducements to visit Manchester, Heaven knows how gratifying! but I have had my little month of 1823 already. It is all over; and without incurring a disagreeable favour I cannot so much as get a single holiday till the season returns with the next year. Even our half-hour's absences from office are set down in a book! Next year, if I can spare a day or two of it, I will come to Manchester; but I have reasons at home against longer absences.

I am so ill just at present (an illness of my own procuring last night; who is perfect?) that nothing but your very great kindness could make me write. I will bear in mind the letter to W. W., and you shall have it quite in time, before the 12th.

My aching and confused head warns me to leave off. With a muddled sense of gratefulness, which I shall apprehend more clearly to-morrow, I remain, your friend unseen, C. L.

Will your occasions or inclination bring you to London? It will give me great pleasure to show you everything that Islington can boast, if you know the

meaning of that very Cockney sound. We have the New River! I am ashamed of this scrawl; but I beg you to accept it for the present. I am full of qualms.

"A fool at fifty is a fool indeed."

CHAPTER V

1824—1827

LETTERS TO BERNARD BARTON AND OTHERS

LETTER CCLVIII

TO BERNARD BARTON

January 9, 1824.

DEAR B. B.—Do you know what it is to succumb under an unsurmountable day-mare,—"a whoreson lethargy," Falstaff calls it,—an indisposition to do anything, or to be anything,—a total deadness and distaste, a suspension of vitality,—an indifference to locality,—a numb, soporifical good-for-nothingness,—an ossification all over,—an oyster-like insensibility to the passing events,—a mind-stupor,—a brawny defiance to the needles of a thrusting-in conscience? Did you ever have a very bad cold, with a total irresolution to submit to water-gruel processes. This has been for many weeks my lot and my excuse. My fingers drag heavily over this paper, and to my thinking it is three-and-twenty furlongs from here to the end of this demi-sheet. I have not a thing to say; nothing is of more importance than another; I am flatter than a denial or a pancake; emptier than Judge Park's wig when the head is in it; duller than a country stage when the actors are off it; a cipher, an 0! I acknowledge life at all, only by an occasional convulsional cough, and a permanent phlegmatic pain in the chest. I am weary of the world; life is weary of me. My day is gone into twilight, and I don't think it worth the expense of candles. My wick hath a thief in it, but

I can't muster courage to snuff it. I inhale suffocation; I can't distinguish veal from mutton; nothing interests me. 'Tis twelve o'clock, and Thurtell is just now coming out upon the New Drop, Jack Ketch alertly tucking up his greasy sleeves to do the last office of mortality; yet cannot I elicit a groan or a moral reflection. If you told me the world will be at an end to-morrow, I should just say, "Will it?" I have not volition enough to dot my *i*'s, much less to comb my eyebrows; my eyes are set in my head; my brains are gone out to see a poor relation in Moorfields, and they did not say when they 'd come back again; my skull is a Grub Street attic, to let —not so much as a joint-stool or a crack'd jordan left in it; my hand writes, not I, from habit, as chickens run about a little when their heads are off. O for a vigorous fit of gout, cholic, toothache,—an earwig in my auditory, a fly in my visual organs! Pain is life—the sharper, the more evidence of life; but this apathy, this death! Did you ever have an obstinate cold,—a six or seven weeks' unintermitting chill and suspension of hope, fear, conscience, and everything? Yet do I try all I can to cure it; I try wine, and spirits, and smoking, and snuff in unsparing quantities; but they all only seem to make me worse, instead of better. I sleep in a damp room, but it does me no good; I come home late o' nights, but do not find any visible amendment! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

It is just fifteen minutes after twelve. Thurtell is

by this time a good way on his journey, baiting at Scorpion perhaps; Ketch is bargaining for his cast coat and waistcoat. The Jew demurs at first at three half-crowns; but, on consideration that he may get somewhat by showing 'em in the town, finally closes.

C. L.

LETTER CCLIX

January 23, 1824.

MY DEAR SIR—That peevish letter of mine, which was meant to convey an apology for my incapacity to write, seems to have been taken by you in too serious a light; it was only my way of telling you I had a severe cold. The fact is, I have been insuperably dull and lethargic for many weeks, and cannot rise to the vigour of a letter, much less an essay. The *London* must do without me for a time, for I have lost all interest about it; and whether I shall recover it again I know not. I will bridle my pen another time, and not teaze and puzzle you with my aridities. I shall begin to feel a little more alive with the Spring. Winter is to me (mild or harsh) always a great trial of the spirits. I am ashamed not to have noticed your tribute to Woolman, whom we love so much. It is done in your good manner. Your friend Taylor called upon me some time since, and seems a very amiable man. His last story is painfully fine. His book I like; it is only too stuffed with Scripture, too parsonish. The best thing in it is the boy's own story. When I say it is too full of

Scripture, I mean it is too full of direct quotations. No book can have too much of silent Scripture in it; but the natural power of a story is diminished when the uppermost purpose in the writer seems to be to recommend something else, viz. Religion. You know what Horace says of the *Deus intersit.* I am not able to explain myself,—you must do it for me. My sister's part in the "Leicester School" (about two-thirds) was purely her own; as it was (to the same quantity) in the "Shakspeare Tales" which bear my name. I wrote only the "Witch Aunt"; the "First Going to Church"; and the final story, about "A little Indian Girl" in a ship. Your account of my black-balling amused me. *I think, as Quakers, they did right.* There are some things hard to be understood. The more I think, the more I am vexed at having puzzled you with that letter; but I have been so out of letter-writing of late years, that it is a sore effort to sit down to it; and I felt in your debt, and sat down waywardly to pay you in bad money. Never mind my dulness; I am used to long intervals of it. The heavens seem brass to me; then again comes the refreshing shower—

"I have been merry once or twice ere now."

You said something about Mr. Mitford in a late letter, which I believe I did not advert to. I shall be happy to show him my Milton (it is all the show things I have) at any time he will take the trouble of a jaunt to Islington. I do also hope to see Mr. Tay-

lor there some day. Pray say so to both. Coleridge's book is in good part printed, but sticks a little for *more copy*. It bears an unsaleable title, "Extracts from Bishop Leighton"; but I am confident there will be plenty of good notes in it, more of Bishop Coleridge than Leighton, I hope; for what is Leighton? Do you trouble yourself about libel cases? The decision against Hunt for the "Vision of Judgment" made me sick. What is to become of the good old talk about our good old King?—his personal virtues saving us from a revolution, etc. etc.! Why, none that think can utter it now. It must stink. And the "vision" is really, as to him-ward, such a tolerant, good-humoured thing. What a wretched thing a Lord Chief Justice is, always was, and will be!

Keep your good spirits up, dear B. B.; mine will return; they are at present in abeyance; but I am rather lethargic than miserable. I don't know but a good horsewhip would be more beneficial to me than physic. My head, without aching, will teach yours to ache. It is well I am getting to the conclusion. I will send a better letter when I am a better man. Let me thank you for your kind concern for me (which I trust will have reason soon to be dissipated), and assure you that it gives me pleasure to hear from you.

Yours truly, C. L.

LETTER CCLX

TO CHARLES OLLIER

[*January 27, 1824.*]

DEAR OLLIER—Many thanks from both of us for *Inesilla.* I wished myself younger, that I might have more enjoyed the terror of that desolate city, and the damned palace. I think it as fine as anything in its way, and wish you joy of success, etc.

With better weather, I shall hope to see you at Islington.

Meantime, believe me, yours truly,

C. LAMB.

Scribbled midst official flurry.

LETTER CCLXI

TO BERNARD BARTON

February 25, 1824.

MY DEAR SIR—Your title of "Poetic Vigils" arrides me much more than a Volume of Verse, which is no meaning. The motto says nothing, but I cannot suggest a better. I do not like mottoes but where they are singularly felicitous; there is foppery in them. They are unplain, un-Quakerish. They are good only where they flow from the title, and are a kind of justification of it. There is nothing about watchings or lucubrations in the one you suggest; no commentary on vigils. By the



way, a wag would recommend you to the line of Pope,

> "Sleepless himself—to give his readers sleep."

I by no means wish it; but it may explain what I mean,—that a neat motto is child of the title. I think "Poetic Vigils" as short and sweet as can be desired; only have an eye on the proof, that the printer do not substitute Virgils, which would ill accord with your modesty or meaning. Your suggested motto is antique enough in spelling, and modern enough in phrases,—a good modern antique; but the matter of it is germane to the purpose, only supposing the title proposed a vindication of yourself from the presumption of authorship. The first title was liable to this objection—that if you were disposed to enlarge it, and the bookseller insisted on its appearance in two tomes, how oddly it would sound, "A Volume of Verse in Two Volumes, Second Edition," etc. You see through my wicked intention of curtailing this epistolet by the above device of large margin. But in truth the idea of letterising has been oppressive to me of late above your candour to give me credit for. There is Southey, whom I ought to have thanked a fortnight ago for a present of the "Church Book": I have never had courage to buckle myself in earnest even to acknowledge it by six words; and yet I am accounted by some people a good man! How cheap that character is acquired! Pay your debts, don't borrow

money, nor twist your kitten's neck off, nor disturb a congregation, etc., your business is done. I know things (thoughts or things, thoughts *are* things) of myself, which would make every friend I have fly me as a plague patient. I once * * *, and set a dog upon a crab's leg that was shoved out under a mass of sea-weeds,—a pretty little feeler. Oh pah! how sick I am of that! and a lie, a mean one, I once told! —I stink in the midst of respect. I am much hypt. The fact is, my head is heavy, but there is hope; or if not, I am better than a poor shell-fish; not morally, when I set the whelp upon it, but have more blood and spirits. Things may turn up, and I may creep again into a decent opinion of myself. Vanity will return with sunshine. Till then, pardon my neglects, and impute it to the wintry solstice.

C. Lamb.

LETTER CCLXII

March 24, 1824.

DEAR B. B.—I hasten to say that if my opinion can strengthen you in your choice, it is decisive for your acceptance of what has been so handsomely offered. I can see nothing injurious to your most honourable sense. Think that you are called to a poetical Ministry—nothing worse: the Minister is worthy of the hire. The only objection I feel is founded on a fear that the acceptance may be a temptation to you to let fall the bone (hard as it is) which is in your mouth, and must afford toler-

able pickings, for the shadow of independence. You cannot propose to become independent on what the low state of interest could afford you from such a principal as you mention; and the most graceful excuse for the acceptance would be, that it left you free to your voluntary functions. That is the less *light* part of the scruple. It has no darker shade. I put in *darker* because of the ambiguity of the word "light," which Donne, in his admirable poem on the Metempsychosis, has so ingeniously illustrated in his invocation—

"Make my ^{1}*dark* ^{2}*heavy* poem, ^{1}*light* and ^{2}*light*,"

where the two senses of *light* are opposed to different opposites. A trifling criticism. I can see no reason for any scruple then but what arises from your own interest; which is in your own power, of course, to solve. If you still have doubts, read over Sanderson's *Cases of Conscience*, and Jeremy Taylor's *Ductor Dubitantium;* the first a moderate octavo, the latter a folio of 900 close pages; and when you have thoroughly digested the admirable reasons *pro* and *con* which they give for every possible case, you will be ——just as wise as when you began. Every man is his own best casuist; and after all, as Ephraim Smooth, in the pleasant comedy of *Wild Oats*, has it, "there is no harm in a Guinea." *A fortiori* there is less in 2000.

I therefore most sincerely congratulate with you,

excepting so far as excepted above. If you have fair prospects of adding to the principal, cut the Bank; but in either case do not refuse an honest service. Your heart tells you it is not offered to bribe you *from* any duty, but *to* a duty which you feel to be your vocation. Farewell heartily. C. L.

LETTER CCLXIII

April 1824.

DEAR B. B.—I am sure I cannot fill a letter, though I should disfurnish my skull to fill it; but you expect something, and shall have a note-let. Is Sunday, not divinely speaking, but humanly and holidaysically, a blessing? Without its institution, would our rugged task-masters have given us a leisure day, so often, think you, as once in a month? or, if it had not been instituted, might they not have given us every sixth day? Solve me this problem. If we are to go three times a-day to church, why has Sunday slipped into the notion of a *holli*day? A HOLYday I grant it. The Puritans, I have read in Southey's book, knew the distinction. They made people observe Sunday rigorously, would not let a nursery-maid walk out in the fields with children for recreation on that day. But *then*—they gave the people a holiday from all sorts of work every second Tuesday. This was giving to the two Cæsars that which was *his* respective. Wise, beautiful, thoughtful, generous legislators! Would Wilberforce give us

our Tuesdays? No: (d—n him!)—he would turn the six days into sevenths,

> "And those three smiling seasons of the year
> Into a Russian Winter."—Old Play.

I am sitting opposite a person who is making strange distortions with the gout, which is not unpleasant—to me at least. What is the reason we do not sympathise with pain, short of some terrible surgical operation! Hazlitt, who boldly says all he feels, avows that not only he does not pity sick people, but he hates them. I obscurely recognise his meaning. Pain is probably too selfish a consideration, too simply a consideration of self-attention. We pity poverty, loss of friends, etc.—more complex things, in which the sufferer's feelings are associated with others. This is a rough thought suggested by the presence of gout; I want head to extricate it and plane it. What is all this to your letter? I felt it to be a good one, but my turn, when I write at all, is perversely to travel out of the record, so that my letters are anything but answers. So you still want a motto! You must not take my ironical one, because your book, I take it, is too serious for it. Bickerstaff might have used it for *his* lucubrations. What do you think of (for a title) *Religio Tremuli?* or *Tremebundi?* There is *Religio-Medici* and *Laici.* But perhaps the volume is not quite Quakerish enough, or exclusively so, for it. Your own "Vigils" is perhaps the best. While I have space, let me congratulate

with you the return of Spring: what a summery Spring too! all those qualms about the dog and crayfish melt before it. I am going to be happy and *vain* again.

A hasty farewell, C. Lamb.

LETTER CCLXIV

May 15, 1824.

DEAR B. B.—I am oppressed with business all day, and Company all night. But I will snatch a quarter of an hour. Your recent acquisitions of the Picture and the Letter are greatly to be congratulated. I too have a picture of my father and the copy of his first love verses; but they have been mine long. Blake is a real name, I assure you, and a most extraordinary man, if he be still living. He is the Robert Blake, whose wild designs accompany a splendid folio edition of the "Night Thoughts," which you may have seen, in one of which he pictures the parting of soul and body by a solid mass of human form floating off, God knows how, from a lumpish mass (fac Simile to itself) left behind on the dying bed. He paints in water colours marvellous strange pictures, visions of his brain, which he asserts that he has seen. They have great merit. He has *seen* the old Welsh bards on Snowdon—he has seen the Beautifullest, the strongest, and the Ugliest Man, left alone from the Massacre of the Britons by the Romans, and has painted them from memory (I have seen his

paintings), and asserts them to be as good as the figures of Raphael and Angelo, but not better, as they had precisely the same retro-visions and prophetic visions with themself [himself]. The painters in oil (which he will have it that neither of them practised) he affirms to have been the ruin of art, and affirms that all the while he was engaged in his Water paintings, Titian was disturbing him, Titian the Ill Genius of Oil Painting. His Pictures—one in particular, the Canterbury Pilgrims (far above Stothard's) —have great merit, but hard, dry, yet with grace. He has written a Catalogue of them with a most spirited criticism on Chaucer, but mystical and full of Vision. His poems have been sold hitherto only in Manuscript. I never read them; but a friend at my desire procured the "Sweep Song." There is one to a tiger, which I have heard recited, beginning—

> "Tiger, Tiger, burning bright,
> Thro' the desarts of the night,"

which is glorious, but, alas! I have not the book; for the man is flown, whither I know not—to Hades or a Mad House. But I must look on him as one of the most extraordinary persons of the age. Montgomery's book I have not much hope from. The Society, with the affected name, has been labouring at it for these 20 years, and made few converts. I think it was injudicious to mix stories avowedly colour'd by fiction with the sad true statements from the parliamentary records, etc., but I wish the little

Negroes all the good that can come from it. I batter'd my brains (not butter'd them—but it is a bad *a*) for a few verses for them, but I could make nothing of it. You have been luckier. But Blake's are the flower of the set, you will, I am sure, agree, tho' some of Montgomery's at the end are pretty; but the Dream awkwardly paraphras'd from B.

With the exception of an Epilogue for a Private Theatrical, I have written nothing now for near 6 months. It is in vain to spur me on. I must wait. I cannot write without a genial impulse, and I have none. 'T is barren all and dearth. No matter; life is something without scribbling. I have got rid of my bad spirits, and hold up pretty well this raindamn'd May.

So we have lost another Poet. I never much relished his Lordship's mind, and shall be sorry if the Greeks have cause to miss him. He was to me offensive, and I never can make out his great *power*, which his admirers talk of. Why, a line of Wordsworth's is a lever to lift the immortal spirit! Byron can only move the Spleen. He was at best a Satyrist, —in any other way, he was mean enough. I daresay I do him injustice; but I cannot love him, nor squeeze a tear to his memory. He did not like the world, and he has left it, as Alderman Curtis advised the Radicals, "If they don't like their Country, damn 'em, let 'em leave it," they possessing no rood of ground in England, and he 10,000 acres. Byron was better than many Curtises.

TO BARTON

Farewell, and accept this apology for a letter from one who owes you so much in that kind.

Yours ever truly, C. L.

B. Barton, Esq., Woodbridge, Suffolk.

LETTER CCLXV

July 7, 1824.

DEAR B. B.—I have been suffering under a severe inflammation of the eyes, notwithstanding which I resolutely went through your very pretty volume at once, which I dare pronounce in no ways inferior to former lucubrations. "*Abroad*" and "*lord*" are vile rhymes notwithstanding, and if you count you will wonder how many times you have repeated the word *unearthly;* thrice in one poem. It is become a slang word with the bards; avoid it in future lustily. "Time" is fine; but there are better a good deal, I think. The volume does not lie by me; and after a long day's smarting fatigue, which has almost put out my eyes (not blind however to your merits), I dare not trust myself with long writing. The verses to Bloomfield are the sweetest in the collection. Religion is sometimes lugged in, as if it did not come naturally. I will go over carefully when I get my seeing, and exemplify. You have also too much of singing metre, such as requires no deep ear to make; lilting measure, in which you have done Woolman injustice. Strike at less superficial melodies. The piece on Nayler is more to my fancy.

My eye runs waters. But I will give you a fuller account some day. The book is a very pretty one in more than one sense. The decorative harp, perhaps, too ostentatious; a simple pipe preferable.

Farewell, and many thanks. C. LAMB.

LETTER CCLXVI

TO JOHN B. DIBDIN

July 28, 1824.

MY DEAR SIR—I must appear negligent in not having thanked you for the very pleasant books you sent me. *Arthur*, and the Novel, we have both of us read with unmixed satisfaction. They are full of quaint conceits, and running over with good-humour and good-nature. I naturally take little interest in story, but in these the manner and not the end is the interest; it is such pleasant travelling one scarce cares whither it leads us. Pray express our pleasure to your father with my best thanks.

I am involved in a routine of visiting among the family of Barron Field, just returned from Botany Bay. I shall hardly have an open evening before *Tuesday* next. Will you come to us then?

Yours truly, C. LAMB.

TO CARY—BARTON

LETTER CCLXVII

TO THE REV. H. F. CARY

East India House,
August 19, 1824.

DEAR SIR—I shall have much pleasure in dining with you on Wednesday next, with much shame that I have not noticed your kind present of the *Birds*, which I found very chirping and whimsical. I believe at the time I was daily thinking of paying you a visit, and put it off—till I should come. Somehow it slipt, and I must crave your pardon.

Yours truly, C. LAMB.

LETTER CCLXVIII

TO BERNARD BARTON

August 1824.

DEAR B. B.—I congratulate you on getting a house over your head. I find the comfort of it I am sure. At my town lodgings the mistress was always quarrelling with our maid, and at my place of rustication the whole family were always beating one another, brothers beating sisters (one, a most beautiful girl, lamed for life), father beating sons and daughters, and son again beating his father, knocking him fairly down, a scene I never before witnessed, but was called out of bed by the unnatural blows, the parricidal colour of which, though

my morals could not but condemn, yet my reason did heartily approve, and in the issue the house was quieter for a day or so than I had ever known. I am now all harmony and quiet, even to the sometimes wishing back again some of the old rufflings. There is something stirring in these civil broils.

The album shall be attended to. If I can light upon a few appropriate rhymes (but rhymes come with difficulty from me now) I shall beg a place in the neat margin of your young housekeeper.

The "Prometheus," *unbound*, is a capital story. The literal rogue! What if you had ordered "Elfrida" in *sheets!* she 'd have been sent up I warrant you. Or bid him clasp his Bible (*i.e.* to his bosom), he 'd have clapt on a brass clasp, no doubt.

I can no more understand Shelley than you can. His poetry is "thin sown with profit or delight." Yet I must point to your notice a sonnet conceived and expressed with a witty delicacy. It is that addressed to one who hated him, but who could not persuade him to hate *him* again. His coyness to the other's passion—(for hate demands a return as much as love, and starves without it)—is most arch and pleasant. Pray, like it very much. For his theories and nostrums, they are oracular enough; but I either comprehend 'em not, or there is "miching malice" and mischief in 'em, but, for the most part, ringing with their own emptiness. Hazlitt said well of 'em—"Many are the wiser and better for reading Shakspeare, but

nobody was ever wiser or better for reading Shelley." I wonder you will sow your correspondence on so barren a ground as I am, that make such poor returns. But my head aches at the bare thought of letter-writing. I wish all the ink in the ocean dried up, and would listen to the quills shivering up in the candle flame, like parching martyrs. The same indisposition to write has stopped my "Elias"; but you will see a futile effort in the next Number, "wrung from me with slow pain." The fact is, my head is seldom cool enough. I am dreadfully indolent. To have to do anything—to order me a new coat, for instance, though my old buttons are shelled like beans —is an effort. My pen stammers like my tongue. What cool craniums those old inditers of folios must have had!—what a mortified pulse! Well; once more I throw myself on your mercy. Wishing peace in thy new dwelling,

C. Lamb.

LETTER CCLXIX

September 30, 1824.

LITTLE book, surnamed of *white*,
Clean as yet, and fair to sight,
Keep thy attribution right.

Never disproportion'd scrawl,
Ugly blot (that 's worse than all),
On thy maiden clearness fall!

In each letter here design'd,
Let the reader emblem'd find
Neatness of the owner's mind.

Gilded margins count a sin;
Let thy leaves attraction win
By the golden rules within;

Sayings fetch'd from sages old;
Laws which Holy Writ unfold,
Worthy to be graved in gold:

Lighter fancies not excluding;
Blameless wit, with nothing rude in,
Sometimes mildly interluding

Amid strains of graver measure:
Virtue's self hath oft her pleasure
In sweet Muses' groves of leisure.

Riddles dark, perplexing sense;
Darker meanings of offence;
What but *shades*—be banish'd hence!

Whitest thoughts, in whitest dress,
Candid meanings, best express
Mind of quiet Quakeress.

DEAR B. B.—"I am ill at these numbers"; but if the above be not too mean to have a place in thy daughter's sanctum, take them with pleasure.

I assume that her name is Hannah, because it is a pretty scriptural cognomen.

I began on another sheet of paper, and just as I had penned the second line of stanza two, an ugly blot fell, to illustrate my counsel. I am sadly given to blot, and modern blotting-paper gives no redress; it only smears, and makes it worse. The only remedy is scratching out, which gives it a clerkish look. The most innocent blots are made with red ink, and are rather ornamental. Marry, they are not always to be distinguished from the effusions of a cut finger. Well, I hope and trust thy tick-doleru, or however you spell it, is vanished, for I have frightful impressions of that tick, and do altogether hate it, as an unpaid score, or the tick of a death-watch. I take it to be a species of Vitus's dance. (I omit the sanctity, writing to "one of the men called friends.") I knew a young lady who could dance no other; she danced it through life, and very queer and fantastic were her steps.

Heaven bless thee from such measures, and keep thee from the foul fiend, who delights to lead after false fires in the night, Flibbertigibbet, that gives the web and the pin, and I forget what else.

From my den, as Bunyan has it, 30th Sep. 1824.

C. L.

LETTER CCLXX

TO MRS. COLLIER

November 2, 1824.

DEAR MRS. COLLIER—We receive so much pig from your kindness, that I really have not phrase enough to vary successive acknowledgments. I think I shall get a printed form to serve on all occasions.

To say it was young, crisp, short, luscious, dainty-toed, is but to say what all its predecessors have been. It was eaten on Sunday and Monday, and doubts only exist as to which temperature it eat best, hot or cold. I incline to the latter. The Petty-feet made a pretty surprising prægustation for supper on Saturday night, just as I was loathingly in expectation of brencheese. I spell as I speak.

I do not know what news to send you. You will have heard of Alsager's death, and your son John's success in the Lottery. I say he is a wise man if he leaves off while he is well. The weather is wet to weariness; but Mary goes puddling about a-shopping after a gown for the winter. She wants it good and cheap. Now I hold that no good things are cheap, pig-presents always excepted. In this mournful weather I sit moping, where I now write, in an office dark as Erebus, jammed in between four walls, and writing by Candle-Light, most melancholy. Never see the light of the sun six hours in the day; and am surprised to find how pretty it shines on Sundays. I

wish I were a Caravan driver, or a Penny postman, to earn my bread in air and sunshine. Such a pedestrian as I am, to be tied by the legs, like a Fauntleroy, without the pleasure of his Exactions! I am interrupted here with an official question which will take me up till it 's time to go to dinner. So with repeated thanks and both our kindest remembrances to Mr. Collier and yourself, I conclude in haste,

Yours and his sincerely, C. LAMB.

On further inquiry Alsager is not dead; but Mrs. A. is brot to bed.

From my Den in Leadenhall.

LETTER CCLXXI

TO B. W. PROCTER

Leadenhall, November 11, '24.

MY DEAR PROCTER—I do agnise a shame in not having been to pay my congratulations to Mrs. Procter and your happy self, but on Sunday (my only morning) I was engaged to a country walk; and in virtue of the hypostatical union between us, when Mary calls, it is understood that I call too, we being univocal.

But indeed I am ill at these ceremonious inductions. I fancy I was not born with a call on my head, though I have brought one down upon it with a vengeance. I love not to pluck that sort of fruit crude, but to stay its ripening into visits. In probability

Mary will be at Southampton Row this morning, and something of that kind be matured between you, but in any case not many hours shall elapse before I shake you by the hand.

Meantime give my kindest felicitations to Mrs. Procter, and assure her I look forward with the greatest delight to our acquaintance. By the way, the deuce a bit of cake has come to hand, which hath an inauspicious look at first, but I comfort myself that that Mysterious Service hath the property of Sacramental Bread, which mice cannot nibble, nor time moulder.

I am married myself to a severe step-wife, who keeps me, not at bed and board, but at desk and board, and is jealous of my morning aberrations. I cannot slip out to congratulate kinder unions. It is well she leaves me alone o'nights,—the d——d Day-hag *Business*. She is even now peeping over me to see I am writing no love letters. I come, my dear—Where is the Indigo Sale Book?

Twenty adieus, my dear friends, till we meet.

Yours most truly, C. Lamb.

LETTER CCLXXII

TO MISS HUTCHINSON

Desk, November 11, 1824.

My dear Miss Hutchinson—Mary bids me thank you for your kind letter. We are a little puzzled about your whereabouts. Miss Wordsworth

writes Torkay, and you have queerly made it Torquay. Now Tokay we have heard of, and Torbay, which we take to be the true *male* spelling of the place; but somewhere we fancy it to be on "Devon's leafy shores," where we heartily wish the kindly breezes may restore all that is invalid among you. Robinson is returned, and speaks much of you all. We shall be most glad to hear good news from you from time to time. The best is, Procter is at last married. We have made sundry attempts to see the bride, but have accidentally failed, she being gone out a-gadding. We had promised our dear friends the Monkhouses—promised ourselves rather—a visit to them at Ramsgate; but I thought it best, and Mary seemed to have it at heart too, not to go far from home these last holydays. It is connected with a sense of unsettlement, and secretly I know she hoped that such abstinence would be friendly to her health. She certainly has escaped her sad yearly visitation, whether in consequence of it, or of faith in it, and we have to be thankful for a good 1824. To get such a notion into our heads may go a great way another year. Not that we quite confined ourselves: but assuming Islington to be headquarters, we made timid flights to Ware, Watford, etc., to try how the trouts tasted, for a night out or so, not long enough to make the sense of change oppressive, but sufficient to scour the rust of home. Coleridge is not returned from the sea. As a little scandal may divert you recluses, we were in the Summer dining at a clergy-

man of Southey's "Church of England," at Hertford, the same who officiated to Thurtell's last moments, and indeed an old contemporary Blue of C.'s and mine at school. After dinner we talked of C.; and F., who is a mighty good fellow in the main, but hath his cassock prejudices, inveighed against the moral character of C. I endeavoured to enlighten him on the subject, till having driven him out of some of his holds, he stopped my mouth at once by appealing to me whether it was not very well known that C. "at that very moment was living in a state of open adultery with Mrs. * * * * * * at Highgate?" Nothing I could say, serious or bantering, after that, could remove the deep inrooted conviction of the whole company assembled that such was the case! Of course you will keep this quite close, for I would not involve my poor blundering friend, who I daresay believed it all thoroughly. My interference of course was imputed to the goodness of my heart, that could imagine nothing wrong, etc. Such it is if ladies will go gadding about with other people's husbands at watering-places. How careful we should be to avoid the appearance of evil!

I thought this anecdote might amuse you. It is not worth resenting seriously; only I give it as a specimen of orthodox candour. O Southey, Southey, how long would it be before you would find one of us Unitarians propagating such unwarrantable scandal! Providence keep you all from the foul fiend,

scandal, and send you back well and happy to dear Gloster Place! C. L.

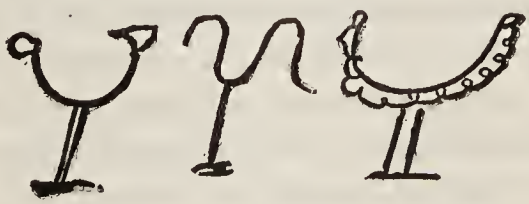
Miss Hutchinson,
T. Monkhouse, Esq.,
Strand, Torkay, Torbay, Devon.

LETTER CCLXXIII

TO BERNARD BARTON

December 1, 1824.

DEAR B. B.—If Mr. Mitford will send me a full and circumstantial description of his desired vases, I will transmit the same to a gentleman resident at Canton, whom I think I have interest enough in to take the proper care for their execution. But Mr. M. must have patience. China is a great way off, further perhaps than he thinks; and his next year's roses must be content to wither in a Wedgwood pot. He will please to say whether he should like his Arms upon them, etc. I send herewith some patterns which suggest themselves to me at the first blush of the subject, but he will probably consult his own taste after all.



The last pattern is obviously fitted for ranuncu-

luses only. The two former may indifferently hold daisies, marjoram, sweet-williams, and that sort. My friend in Canton is Inspector of Teas; his name is Ball; and I can think of no better tunnel. I shall expect Mr. M.'s decision.

Taylor and Hessey finding their magazine goes off very heavily at 2s. 6d. are prudently going to raise their price another shilling; and having already more authors than they want, intend to increase the number of them. If they set up against the *New Monthly* they must change their present hands. It is not tying the dead carcase of a Review to a half-dead Magazine will do their business. It is like George Dyer multiplying his volumes to make 'em sell better. When he finds one will not go off, he publishes two; two stick, he tries three; three hang fire, he is confident that four will have a better chance.

And now, my dear sir, trifling apart, the gloomy catastrophe of yesterday morning prompts a sadder vein. The fate of the unfortunate Fauntleroy makes me, whether I will or no, to cast reflecting eyes around on such of my friends as, by a parity of situation, are exposed to a similarity of temptation. My very style seems to myself to become more impressive than usual, with the change of theme. Who that standeth, knoweth but he may yet fall? Your hands as yet, I am most willing to believe, have never deviated into other's property. You think it impossible that you could ever commit so heinous an

offence; but so thought Fauntleroy once; so have thought many besides him, who at last have expiated as he hath done. You are as yet upright; but you are a banker, at least the next thing to it. I feel the delicacy of the subject; but cash must pass through your hands, sometimes to a great amount. If in an unguarded hour——but I will hope better. Consider the scandal it will bring upon those of your persuasion. Thousands would go to see a Quaker hanged, that would be indifferent to the fate of a Presbyterian or an Anabaptist. Think of the effect it would have on the sale of your poems alone, not to mention higher considerations! I tremble, I am sure, at myself, when I think that so many poor victims of the law, at one time of their life, made as sure of never being hanged, as I in my presumption am too ready to do myself. What are we better than they? Do we come into the world with different necks? Is there any distinctive mark under our left ears? Are we unstrangulable, I ask you? Think of these things. I am shocked sometimes at the shape of my own fingers, not for their resemblance to the ape tribe (which is something), but for the exquisite adaptation of them to the purposes of picking, fingering, etc. No one that is so framed, I maintain it, but should tremble.

C. L.

LETTER CCLXXIV

TO SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

1824.

DEAR COLERIDGE—Why will you make your visits, which should give pleasure, matter of regret to your friends? You never come but you take away some folio, that is part of my existence. With a great deal of difficulty I was made to comprehend the extent of my loss. My maid, Becky, brought me a dirty bit of paper, which contained her description of some book which Mr. Coleridge had taken away. It was "Luster's Tables," which, for some time, I could not make out. "What! has he carried away any of the *tables*, Becky?" "No, it was n't any tables, but it was a book that he called Luster's Tables." I was obliged to search personally among my shelves, and a huge fissure suddenly disclosed to me the true nature of the damage I had sustained. That book, Coleridge, you should not have taken away, for it is not mine; it is the property of a friend, who does not know its value, nor indeed have I been very sedulous in explaining to him the estimate of it; but was rather contented in giving a sort of corroboration to a hint that he let fall, as to its being suspected to be not genuine, so that in all probability it would have fallen to me as a deodand; not but I am as sure it is Luther's as I am sure that Jack Bunyan wrote the *Pilgrim's Progress;* but it was not for me to pronounce upon the

validity of testimony that had been disputed by learneder clerks than I; so I quietly let it occupy the place it had usurped upon my shelves, and should never have thought of issuing an ejectment against it; for why should I be so bigoted as to allow rites of hospitality to none but my own books, children, etc.?—a species of egotism I abhor from my heart. No; let 'em all snug together, Hebrews and Proselytes of the gate; no selfish partiality of mine shall make distinction between them. I charge no warehouse room for my friends' commodities; they are welcome to come and stay as long as they like, without paying rent. I have several such strangers that I treat with more than Arabian courtesy. There 's a copy of More's fine poem, which is none of mine, but I cherish it as my own. I am none of those churlish landlords that advertise the goods to be taken away in ten days' time, or then to be sold to pay expenses. So you see I had no right to lend you that book. I may lend you my own books, because it is at my own hazard; but it is not honest to hazard a friend's property; I always make that distinction. I hope you will bring it with you, or send it by Hartley; or he can bring that, and you the *Polemical Discourses*, and come and eat some atoning mutton with us one of these days shortly. We are engaged two or three Sundays deep, but always dine at home on week-days at half-past four. So come all four—men and books I mean. My third shelf (northern com-

partment) from the top has two devilish gaps, where you have knocked out its two eye-teeth.

Your wronged friend, C. Lamb.

LETTER CCLXXV

TO LEIGH HUNT

[End of 1824.]

Illustrezzimo Signor—I have obeyed your mandate to a tittle. I accompany this with a volume; but what have you done with the first I sent you? Have you swapped it with some lazzaroni for macaroni, or pledged it with a gondolierer for a passage? Peradventuri the Cardinal Gonsalvi took a fancy to it: his Eminence has done my Nearness an honour. 'T is but a step to the Vatican. As you judge, my works do not enrich the workman; but I get *vat I can* for 'em. They keep dragging me on, a poor, worn mill-horse, in the eternal round of the damned magazine; but 't is they are blind, not I. Colburn (where I recognise with delight the gay W. Honeycomb renovated) hath the ascendency. I was with the Novellos last week. They have a large, cheap house and garden, with a dainty library (magnificent) without books; but what will make you bless yourself (I am too old for wonder), something has touched the right organ in Vincentio at last. He attends a Wesleyan chapel on Kingsland Green. He at first tried to laugh it off; he only went for the singing; but the cloven foot—I retract—the lamb's

trotters are at length apparent. Mary Isabella attributes it to a lightness induced by his headaches; but I think I see in it a less accidental influence. Mr. Clark is at perfect staggers! the whole fabric of his infidelity is shaken. He has no one to join him in his horse-insults and indecent obstreperousnesses against Christianity; for Holmes (the bonny Holmes) is gone to Salisbury to be organist, and Isabella and the Clark make but a feeble quorum. The children have all neat little clasped pray-books; and I have laid out seven shillings and eightpence in Watts's Hymns for Christmas presents for them. The eldest girl alone holds out. She has been at Boulogne, skirting upon the vast focus of Atheism, and imported bad principles in patois French. But the strongholds are crumbling. N. appears as yet to have but a confused notion of the Atonement. It makes him giddy, he says, to think much about it; but such giddiness is spiritual sobriety. Well, Byron is gone; and —— is now the best poet in England. Fill up the gap to your fancy. Barry Cornwall has at last carried the pretty A[nne] S[kepper]. They are just in the treacle-moon. Hope it won't clog his wings (gaum, we used to say at school). Mary, my sister, has worn me out with eight weeks' cold and toothache, her average complement in the Winter; and it will not go away. She is otherwise well, and reads novels all day long. She has had an exempt year, a good year; for which, forgetting the minor calamity, she and I are most thankful. Alsager is in a flourishing house, with wife

and children about him, in Mecklenburg Square,—almost too fine to visit. Barron Field is come home from Sydney; but as yet I can hear no tidings of a pension. He is plump and friendly; his wife, really a very superior woman. He resumes the bar. I have got acquainted with Mr. Irving, the Scotch preacher, whose fame must have reached you. He is an humble disciple at the foot of Gamaliel S. T. C. Judge how his own sectarists must stare, when I tell you he has dedicated a book to S. T. C., acknowledging to have learnt more of the nature of faith, Christianity, and Christian Church, from him than from all the men he ever conversed with! He is a most amiable, sincere, modest man in a room, this Boanerges in the temple. Mrs. Montague told him the dedication would do him no good. "That shall be a reason for doing it," was his answer. Judge, now, whether this man be a quack. Dear H., take this imperfect note-let for a letter: it looks so much the more like conversing on nearer terms. Love to all the Hunts, old friend Thornton, and all.

Yours ever, C. Lamb.

LETTER CCLXXVI

TO THOMAS ALLSOP

Colebrook Cottage, Islington,
January 7, 1825.

Dear Allsop—I acknowledge with thanks the receipt of a draft on Messrs. Wms. for

£81 : 11 : 3 which I haste to cash in the present alarming state of the money market. Hurst and Robinson gone. I have imagined a Chorus of ill-used Authors singing on the Occasion:

What should we when Booksellers break?
We should rejoice.
Da capo.

We regret exceedingly Mrs. Allsop's being unwell. Mary or both will come and see her soon. The frost is cruel, and we have both colds. I take Pills again, which battle with your Wine; and Victory hovers doubtful. By the by, tho' not disinclined to presents, I remember our bargain to take a dozen at sale price, and must demur.

With once again thanks and best loves to Mrs. A.
Turn over—Yours, C. LAMB.

LETTER CCLXXVII

TO JOHN B. DIBDIN

E. I. H., January 11, 1825.

MY DEAR SIR—Pray return my best thanks to your father for his little volume. It is like all of his I have seen—spirited, good-humoured, and redolent of the wit and humour of a century ago. He should have lived with Gay and his set. The *Chessiad* is so clever that I relished it in spite of my total ignorance of the game. I have it not before me, but I remember a capital simile of the Charwoman letting in her Watchman husband, which is better

than Butler's Lobster turned to Red. Hazard is a grand character—Jove in his Chair. When you are disposed to leave your one room for my six, Colebrooke is where it was; and my sister begs me to add that as she is disappointed of meeting your sister *your way*, we shall be most happy to see her *our way*, when you have an evening to spare. Do not stand on ceremonies and introductions, but come at once. I need not say that if you can induce your father to join the party it will be so much the pleasanter. Can you name an evening *next week?* I give you long credit.

Meantime am, as usual, yours truly, C. L.

When I saw the *Chessiad* advertised by C. D. the younger, I hoped it might be yours. What title is left for you?

Charles Dibdin the younger, *junior.*

O no, you are Timothy!

LETTER CCLXXVIII

TO MISS HUTCHINSON

The brevity of this is owing to scratching it off at my desk amid expected interruptions. By habit, I can write letters only at office.

January 20, 1825.

DEAR Miss H.—Thank you for a noble goose, which wanted only the massive incrustation that we used to pick-axe open, about this season, in

Old Gloucester Place. When shall we eat another goose pie together? The pheasant, too, must not be forgotten; twice as big, and half as good as a Partridge. You ask about the editor of the *London;* I know of none. This first specimen is flat and pert enough to justify subscribers who grudge t'other shilling. De Quincey's "Parody" was submitted to him before printed, and had his *Probatum.* The "Horns" is in a poor taste, resembling the most laboured papers in the *Spectator.* I had signed it "Jack Horner"; but Taylor and Hessey said it would be thought an offensive article unless I put my known signature to it, and wrung from me my slow consent. But did you read the "Memoir of Liston"?—and did you guess whose it was? Of all the lies I ever put off, I value this most. It is from top to toe, every paragraph, Pure Invention, and has passed for gospel; has been republished in newspapers, and in the penny playbills of the night, as an authentic account. I shall certainly go to the naughty man some day for my fibbings. In the next Number I figure as a Theologian! and have attacked my late brethren, the Unitarians. What Jack-Pudding tricks I shall play next, I know not; I am almost at the end of my tether. Coleridge is quite blooming, but his book has not budded yet. I hope I have spelt Torquay right now, and that this will find you all mending, and looking forward to a London flight with the Spring. Winter, *we* have had none, but plenty of foul weather. I have lately picked up an epigram which pleased me—

"Two noble earls, whom if I quote,
Some folks might call me sinner,
The one invented half a coat,
The other half a dinner.

The plan was good, as some will say;
And fitted to console one;
Because, in this poor starving day,
Few can afford a whole one."

I have made the lame one still lamer by imperfect memory; but spite of bald diction, a little done to it might improve it into a good one. You have nothing else to do at Torquay. Suppose you try it. Well, God bless you all, as wishes Mary most sincerely, with many thanks for letter, etc. ELIA.

LETTER CCLXXIX

TO VINCENT NOVELLO

Colebrook, Tuesday,
Jan. 25, 1825.

DEAR NOVELLO—My sister's cold is as obstinate as an old Handelian, whom a modern amateur is trying to convert to Mozart-ism. As company must, and always does, injure it, Emma and I propose to come to you in the evening of to-morrow, *instead of meeting here.* An early bread-and-cheese supper at half-past eight will oblige us. Loves to the bearer of many children. C. LAMB.

I sign with a black seal, that you may [begin] to

think her cold has killed Mary; which will be an agreeable unsurprise when you read the note.

V. Novello, Esq., Green, Shacklewell.

LETTER CCLXXX

TO BERNARD BARTON

February 10, 1825.

DEAR B. B.—I am vexed that ugly paper should have offended. I kept it as clear from objectionable phrases as possible, and it was Hessey's fault, and my weakness, that it did not appear anonymous. No more of it, for God's sake. The "Spirit of the Age" is by Hazlitt. The characters of Coleridge, etc., he had done better in former publications, the praise and the abuse much stronger, etc.; but the new ones are capitally done. Horne Tooke is a matchless portrait. My advice is, to borrow it rather than buy it. I have it. He has laid too many colours on my likeness; but I have had so much injustice done me in my own name, that I make a rule of accepting as much over-measure to Elia as gentlemen think proper to bestow. Lay it on and spare not. Your gentleman brother sets my mouth a-watering after liberty. Oh that I were kicked out of Leadenhall with every mark of indignity, and a competence in my fob! The birds of the air would not be so free as I should. How I would prance and curvet it, and pick up cowslips, and ramble about purposeless, as an idiot! The Author-mometer is a good fancy. I have caused

great speculation in the dramatic (not *thy*) world by a lying "Life of Liston," all pure invention. The town has swallowed it, and it is copied into newspapers, play-bills, etc., as authentic. You do not know the Droll, and possibly missed reading the article (in our first Number, new series). A life more improbable for him to have lived would not be easily invented. But your rebuke, coupled with "Dream on J. Bunyan," checks me. I 'd rather do more in my favourite way, but feel dry. I must laugh sometimes. I am poor Hypochondriacus, and *not* Liston. The second Number is all trash. What are T. and H. about? Why did poor Scott die? There was comfort in writing with such associates as were his little band of scribblers; some gone away, some affronted away, and I am left as the solitary widow looking for watercresses. The only clever hand they have is Darley, who has written on the Dramatists under the name of John Lacy. But his function seems suspended.

I have been harassed more than usually at office, which has stopt my correspondence lately. I write with a confused aching head, and you must accept this apology for a letter.

I will do something soon, if I can, as a peace-offering to the queen of the East Angles—something she shan't scold about. For the present farewell.

Thine, C. L.

I am fifty years old this day. Drink my health.

TO MANNING—BARTON

LETTER CCLXXXI

TO THOMAS MANNING

[Early in 1825.]

MY DEAR M.—You might have come inopportunely a week since, when we had an inmate. At present and for as long as *ever* you like, our castle is at your service. I saw T[uthill] yesternight, who has done for me what may

> "To all my nights and days to come,
> Give solely sovran sway and masterdom."

But I dare not hope, for fear of disappointment. I cannot be more explicit at present. But I have it under his own hand, that I am *non*-capacitated (I cannot write it *in*-) for business. O joyous imbecility! Not a susurration of this to *anybody!*

Mary's love. C. LAMB.

LETTER CCLXXXII

TO BERNARD BARTON

March 23, 1825.

DEAR B. B.—I have had no impulse to write, or attend to any single object but myself for weeks past—my single self, I—by myself—I. I am sick of hope deferred. The grand wheel is in agitation, that is to turn up my Fortune; but round it rolls, and will turn up nothing. I have a glimpse of freedom, of becoming a Gentleman at large; but I

am put off from day to day. I have offered my resignation, and it is neither accepted nor rejected. Eight weeks am I kept in this fearful suspense. Guess what an absorbing stake I feel it. I am not conscious of the existence of friends present or absent. The East India Directors alone can be that thing to me or not. I have just learned that nothing will be decided this week. Why the next? Why any week? It has fretted me into an itch of the fingers; I rub 'em against paper, and write to you, rather than not allay this scorbuta.

While I can write, let me abjure you to have no doubts of Irving. Let Mr. Mitford drop his disrespect. Irving has prefixed a dedication (of a missionary subject, first part) to Coleridge, the most beautiful, cordial, and sincere. He there acknowledges his obligation to S. T. C. for his knowledge of Gospel truths, the nature of a Christian Church, etc., to the talk of Samuel Taylor Coleridge (at whose Gamaliel feet he sits weekly), rather than to that of all the men living. This from him, the great dandled and petted sectarian—to a religious character so equivocal in the world's eye as that of S. T. C., so foreign to the Kirk's estimate—can this man be a quack? The language is as affecting as the spirit of the dedication. Some friend told him, "This dedication will do you no good," *i.e.* not in the world's repute, or with your own people. "That is a reason for doing it," quoth Irving.

I am thoroughly pleased with him. He is firm,

out-speaking, intrepid, and docile as a pupil of Pythagoras. You must like him.

Yours, in tremors of painful hope,

C. LAMB.

LETTER CCLXXXIII

TO WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

Colebrook Cottage, April 6, 1825.

DEAR WORDSWORTH—I have been several times meditating a letter to you concerning the good thing which has befallen me, but the thought of poor Monkhouse came across me. He was one that I had exulted in the prospect of congratulating me. He and you were to have been the first participators, for indeed it has been ten weeks since the first motion of it. Here am I then, after thirty-three years' slavery, sitting in my own room at eleven o'clock this finest of all April mornings, a freed man, with £441 a year for the remainder of my life, live I as long as John Dennis, who outlived his annuity and starved at ninety; £441, *i.e.* £450, with a deduction of £9 for a provision secured to my sister, she being survivor, the pension guaranteed by Act Georgii Tertii, etc.

I came home FOR EVER on Tuesday in last week. The incomprehensibleness of my condition overwhelmed me. It was like passing from life into eternity. Every year to be as long as three, *i.e.* to have three times as much real time (time that is my

own) in it! I wandered about thinking I was happy, but feeling I was not. But that tumultuousness is passing off, and I begin to understand the nature of the gift. Holydays, even the annual month, were always uneasy joys; their conscious fugitiveness; the craving after making the most of them. Now, when all is holyday, there are no holydays. I can sit at home, in rain or shine, without a restless impulse for walkings. I am daily steadying, and shall soon find it as natural to me to be my own master, as it has been irksome to have had a master. Mary wakes every morning with an obscure feeling that some good has happened to us.

Leigh Hunt and Montgomery, after their releasements, describe the shock of their emancipation much as I feel mine. But it hurt their frames. I eat, drink, and sleep as sound as ever. I lay no anxious schemes for going hither and thither, but take things as they occur. Yesterday I excursioned twenty miles; to-day I write a few letters. Pleasuring was for fugitive playdays; mine are fugitive only in the sense that life is fugitive. Freedom and life co-existent!

At the foot of such a call upon you for gratulation, I am ashamed to advert to that melancholy event. Monkhouse was a character I learned to love slowly, but it grew upon me, yearly, monthly, daily. What a chasm has it made in our pleasant parties! His noble friendly face was always coming before me, till this hurrying event in my life came, and for the time has absorbed all interest; in fact it has shaken

me a little. My old desk companions, with whom I have had such merry hours, seem to reproach me for removing my lot from among them. They were pleasant creatures; but to the anxieties of business, and a weight of possible worse ever impending, I was not equal. Tuthill and Gillman gave me my certificates. I laughed at the friendly lie implied in them; but my sister shook her head, and said it was all true. Indeed, this last Winter I was jaded out: Winters were always worse than other parts of the year, because the spirits are worse, and I had no daylight. In Summer I had daylight evenings. The relief was hinted to me from a superior Power, when I, poor slave, had not a hope but that I must wait another seven years with Jacob: and lo! the Rachel which I coveted is brought to me!

Have you read the noble dedication of Irving's "Missionary Orations" to S. T. C.? Who shall call this man a quack hereafter? What the Kirk will think of it neither I nor Irving care. When somebody suggested to him that it would not be likely to do him good, videlicet, among his own people, "That is a reason for doing it," was his noble answer. That Irving thinks he has profited mainly by S. T. C., I have no doubt. The very style of the Dedication shows it.

Communicate my news to Southey, and beg his pardon for my being so long acknowledging his kind present of the "Church," which circumstances, having no reference to himself, prevented at the

time. Assure him of my deep respect and friendliest feelings.

Divide the same, or rather each take the whole to you—I mean you and all yours. To Miss Hutchinson I must write separate.

Farewell! and end at last, long selfish letter.

C. LAMB.

LETTER CCLXXXIV

TO BERNARD BARTON

April 6, 1825.

DEAR B. B.—My spirits are so tumultuary with the novelty of my recent emancipation, that I have scarce steadiness of hand, much more mind, to compose a letter. I am free, B. B.—free as air!

> "The little bird that wings the sky
> Knows no such liberty."

I was set free on Tuesday in last week at four o'clock. I came home for ever!

I have been describing my feelings as well as I can to Wordsworth in a long letter, and don't care to repeat. Take it briefly, that for a few days I was painfully oppressed by so mighty a change, but it is becoming daily more natural to me. I went and sat among 'em all at my old thirty-three years' desk yester morning; and, deuce take me, if I had not yearnings at leaving all my old pen-and-ink fellows, merry, sociable lads, at leaving them in the lurch, fag, fag, fag!—The comparison of my own superior felicity gave me anything but pleasure.

B. B., I would not serve another seven years for seven hundred thousand pounds! I have got £441 net for life, sanctioned by Act of Parliament, with a provision for Mary if she survives me. I will live another fifty years; or, if I live but ten, they will be thirty, reckoning the quantity of real time in them, *i.e.* the time that is a man's own. Tell me how you like "Barbara S." Will it be received in atonement for the foolish "Vision"?—I mean by the lady. *A-propos*, I never saw Mrs. Crawford in my life; nevertheless 't is all true of somebody.

Address me, in future, Colebrook Cottage, Islington. I am really nervous (but that will wear off), so take this brief announcement. Yours truly,

C. L.

LETTER CCLXXXV

TO MISS HUTCHINSON

April 18, 1825.

DEAR Miss Hutchinson—You want to know all about my gaol delivery. Take it then. About twelve weeks since I had a sort of intimation that a resignation might be well accepted from me. This was a kind bird's whisper. On that hint I spake. Gillman and Tuthill furnished me with certificates of wasted health and sore spirits—not much more than the truth, I promise you—and for nine weeks I was kept in a fright. I had gone too far to recede, and they might take advantage, and dismiss me with a much less sum than I had reckoned on. However,

liberty came at last, with a liberal provision. I have given up what I could have lived on in the country; but have enough to live here, by management and scribbling occasionally. I would not go back to my prison for seven years longer for £10,000 a year; seven years after one is fifty, is no trifle to give up. Still I am a young *pensioner*, and have served but thirty-three years; very few, I assure you, retire before forty, forty-five, or fifty years' service.

You will ask how I bear my freedom? Faith, for some days I was staggered; could not comprehend the magnitude of my deliverance; was confused, giddy; knew not whether I was on my head or my heel, as they say. But those giddy feelings have gone away, and my weather-glass stands at a degree or two above

CONTENT.

I go about quiet, and have none of that restless hunting after recreation which made holydays formerly uneasy joys. All being holydays, I feel as if I had none, as they do in heaven, where 't is all red-letter days. I have a kind letter from the Wordsworths, *congratulatory* not a little. It is a damp, I do assure you, amid all my prospects, that I can receive *none* from a quarter upon which I had calculated, almost more than from any, upon receiving congratulations. I had grown to like poor Monkhouse more and more. I do not esteem a soul living or not living more warmly than I had grown to es-

teem and value him. But words are vain. We have none of us to count upon many years. That is the only cure for sad thoughts. If only some died, and the rest were permanent on earth, what a thing a friend's death would be then!

I must take leave, having put off answering a load of letters to this morning; and this, alas! is the first. Our kindest remembrances to Mrs. Monkhouse,

And believe us yours most truly, C. LAMB.

LETTER CCLXXXVI

TO WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

[Middle of *May 1825.*]

DEAR W.—I write post-haste to ensure a frank. Thanks for your hearty congratulations. I may now date from the sixth week of my "Hegira, or Flight from Leadenhall." I have lived so much in it, that a Summer seems already past; and 't is but early May yet with you and other people. How I look down on the slaves and drudges of the world! Its inhabitants are a vast cotton-web of spin-spin-spinners! O the carking cares! O the money-grubbers! Sempiternal muckworms!

Your Virgil I have lost sight of, but suspect it is in the hands of Sir G. Beaumont; I think that circumstances made me shy of procuring it before. Will you write to him about it?—and your commands shall be obeyed to a tittle.

Coleridge has just finished his prize Essay by

which, if it get the prize, he 'll touch an additional £100 I fancy. His book, too ("Commentary on Bishop Leighton"), is quite finished, and *penes* Taylor and Hessey.

In the *London Magazine*, which is just out (1st of May), are two papers entitled the "Superannuated Man," which I wish you to see; and also, 1st of April, a little thing called "Barbara S——," a story gleaned from Miss Kelly. The *London Magazine*, if you can get it, will save my enlargement upon the topic of my manumission.

I must scribble to make up my *hiatus crumenæ;* for there are so many ways, pious and profligate, of getting rid of money in this vast city and suburbs, that I shall miss my THIRDS. But *couragio!* I despair not. Your kind hint of the cottage was well thrown out; an anchorage for *age* and school of economy, when necessity comes; but without this latter, I have an unconquerable terror of changing place. It does not agree with us. I say it from conviction; else I do sometimes ruralise in fancy.

Some d—d people are come in, and I must finish abruptly. By d—d, I only mean deuced. 'T is these suitors of Penelope that makes it necessary to *authorise* a little for gin and mutton, and such trifles.

Excuse my abortive scribble.

Yours, not in more haste than heart, C. L.

Love and recollects to all the Wms., Doras, Marys, round your Wrekin.

Mary is capitally well. Do write to Sir G. B., for I am shyish of applying to him.

LETTER CCLXXXVII

TO BERNARD BARTON

July 2, 1825.

MY DEAR B. B.—My nervous attack has so unfitted me that I have not courage to sit down to a letter. My poor pittance in the *London* you will see is drawn from my sickness. Your book is very acceptable to me, because most of it is new to me; but your book itself we cannot thank you for more sincerely than for the introduction you favoured us with to Anne Knight. Now cannot I write *Mrs.* Anne Knight for the life of me. She is a very pleas——, but I won't write all we have said of her so often to ourselves, because I suspect you would read it to her. Only give my sister's and my kindest *remembrances* to her, and how glad we are we can say that word. If ever she come to Southwark again, I count upon another pleasant Bridge walk with her. Tell her, I got home, time for a rubber; but poor Tryphena will not understand that phrase of the worldling.

I am hardly able to appreciate your volume now: but I liked the dedication much, and the apology for your bald burying grounds. To Shelley; but *that* is not new. To the young Vesper-singer, Great Bealings, Playford, and what not.

If there be a cavil, it is that the topics of religious consolation, however beautiful, are repeated till a sort of triteness attends them. It seems as if you were for ever losing friends' children by death, and reminding their parents of the Resurrection. Do children die so often, and so good, in your parts? The topic taken from the consideration that they are snatched away from *possible vanities*, seems hardly sound; for to an Omniscient eye their conditional failings must be one with their actual; but I am too unwell for theology.

Such as I am,

I am yours and A[nne] K[night's] truly,

C. LAMB.

LETTER CCLXXXVIII

TO SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

Islington, July 2, 1825.

DEAR C.—We are going off to Enfield, to Allsop's, for a day or two, with some intention of succeeding them in their lodging for a time, for this damned nervous fever (vide *London Magazine* for July) indisposes me for seeing any friends, and never any poor devil was so befriended as I am. Do you know any poor solitary human that wants that cordial to life, a true friend? I can spare him twenty: he shall have 'em good cheap. I have gallipots of 'em —genuine balm of cares—a going, a going, a going! Little plagues plague me a thousand times more

than ever. I am like a disembodied soul in this, my eternity. I feel everything entirely, all in all, and all in, etc. This price I pay for liberty, but am richly content to pay it. The Odes are four-fifths done by Hood, a silentish young man you met at Islington one day, an invalid. The rest are Reynolds's, whose sister H. has recently married. I have not had a broken finger in them.

They are hearty, good-natured things, and I would put my name to 'em cheerfully, if I could as honestly. I complimented 'em in a newspaper, with an abatement for those puns you laud so. They are generally an excess. A Pun is a thing of too much consequence to be thrown in as a make-weight. You shall read one of the "Addresses" over and miss the puns, and it shall be quite as good, and better, than when you discover 'em. A Pun is a noble thing *per se:* O never lug it in as an accessory. A Pun is a sole object for Reflection (*vide my* "Aids" to that recessment from a savage state)—it is entire, it fills the mind; it is perfect as a sonnet, better. It limps ashamed in the train and retinue of Humour: it knows it should have an establishment of its own. The one, for instance, I made the other day,—I forget what it was.

Hood will be gratified, as much as I am, by your mistake. I liked "Grimaldi" the best; it is true painting of abstract clownery, and that precious concrete of a clown: and the rich succession of images, and words almost such, in the first half of the "Magnum

Ignotum." . . . Hood has just come in; his sick eyes sparkled into health when he read your approbation. They had meditated a copy for you, but postponed it till a neater second edition which is at hand. We are walking out to Enfield after our Beans and Bacon which are just smoking. Kindest remembrances to the G.'s ever. From Islington, 1st Day, 3rd month of my Hegira, or Flight from Leadenhall.

C. L., *Olim Clericus.*

LETTER CCLXXXIX

TO BERNARD BARTON

August 10, 1825.

WE shall be soon again at Colebrook.

Dear B. B.—You must excuse my not writing before, when I tell you we are on a visit at Enfield, where I do not feel it natural to sit down to a letter. It is at all times an exertion. I would rather talk with you and Anne Knight quietly at Colebrook Lodge, over the matter of your last. You mistake me when you express misgivings about my relishing a series of scriptural poems. I wrote confusedly. What I meant to say was, that one or two consolatory poems on deaths would have had a more condensed effect than many. Scriptural, devotional topics admit of infinite variety. So far from poetry tiring me because religious, I can read, and I say it seriously, the homely old version of the Psalms in

our Prayer Books for an hour or two together sometimes without sense of weariness.

I did not express myself clearly about what I think a false topic insisted on so frequently in consolatory addresses on the death of infants. I know something like it is in Scripture, but I think humanly spoken. It is a natural thought, a sweet fallacy to the survivors, but still a fallacy. If it stands on the doctrine of this being a probationary state, it is liable to this dilemma. Omniscience, to whom possibility must be clear as act, must know of the child, what it would hereafter turn out: if good, then the topic is false to say it is secured from falling into future wilfulness, vice, etc. If bad, I do not see how its exemption from certain future overt acts, by being snatched away, at all tells in its favour. You stop the arm of a murderer, or arrest the finger of a pickpurse; but is not the guilt incurred as much by the intent as if never so much acted? Why children are hurried off, and old reprobates of a hundred left, whose trial humanly we may think was complete at fifty, is among the obscurities of Providence. The very notion of a state of probation has darkness in it. The All-knower has no need of satisfying His eyes by seeing what we will do, when He knows before what we will do. Methinks we might be condemned before commission. In these things we grope and flounder, and if we can pick up a little human comfort that the child taken is snatched from vice (no great compliment to it, by the by), let us take it. And as to

where an untried child goes, whether to join the assembly of its elders who have borne the heat of the day—fire-purified martyrs, and torment-sifted confessors—what know we! We promise heaven, methinks, too cheaply and assign large revenues to minors, incompetent to manage them. Epitaphs run upon this topic of consolation, till the very frequency induces a cheapness. Tickets for admission into Paradise are sculptured out at a penny a letter, twopence a syllable, etc. It is all a mystery; and the more I try to express my meaning (having none that is clear), the more I flounder. Finally, write what your own conscience, which to you is the unerring judge, seems best, and be careless about the whimsies of such a half-baked notionist as I am. We are here in a most pleasant country, full of walks, and idle to our hearts' desire. Taylor has dropt the *London*. It was indeed a dead weight. It has got in the Slough of Despond. I shuffle off my part of the pack, and stand like Christian with light and merry shoulders. It had got silly, indecorous, pert, and everything that is bad. Both our kind *remembrances* to Mrs. K. and yourself, and strangers'-greeting to Lucy (is it Lucy or Ruth?) that gathers wise sayings in a Book.

C. Lamb.

TO SOUTHEY

LETTER CCXC

TO ROBERT SOUTHEY

August 19, 1825.

DEAR SOUTHEY—You 'll know who this letter comes from by opening slap-dash upon the text, as in the good old times. I never could come into the custom of envelopes; 't is a modern foppery; the Plinian correspondence gives no hint of such. In singleness of sheet and meaning, then, I thank you for your little book. I am ashamed to add a codicil of thanks for your "Book of the Church." I scarce feel competent to give an opinion of the latter; I have not reading enough of that kind to venture at it. I can only say the fact, that I have read it with attention and interest. Being, as you know, not quite a Churchman, I felt a jealousy at the Church taking to herself the whole deserts of Christianity, Catholic and Protestant, from Druid extirpation downwards. I call all good Christians the Church, Capillarians and all. But I am in too light a humour to touch these matters. May all our churches flourish! Two things staggered me in the poem (and one of them staggered both of us). I cannot away with a beautiful series of verses, as I protest they are, commencing "Jenner." 'T is like a choice banquet opened with a pill or an electuary—physic stuff. T'other is, we cannot make out how Edith should be no more than ten years old. By'r Lady, we had taken her to be some sixteen or upwards. We suppose you have only

chosen the round number for the metre. Or poem and dedication may be both older than they pretend to; but then some hint might have been given; for, as it stands, it may only serve some day to puzzle the parish reckoning. But without inquiring further (for 't is ungracious to look into a lady's years), the dedication is eminently pleasing and tender, and we wish Edith May Southey joy of it. Something, too, struck us as if we had heard of the death of John May. A John May's death was a few years since in the papers. We think the tale one of the quietest, prettiest things we have seen. You have been temperate in the use of localities, which generally spoil poems laid in exotic regions. You mostly cannot stir out (in such things) for humming-birds and fire-flies. A tree is a Magnolia, etc.—Can I but like the truly Catholic spirit? "Blame as thou mayest the Papist's erring creed"—which, and other passages, brought me back to the old Anthology days, and the admonitory lesson to "Dear George" on the "The Vesper Bell," a little poem which retains its first hold upon me strangely.

The compliment to the translatress is daintily conceived. Nothing is choicer in that sort of writing than to bring in some remote, impossible parallel, —as between a great empress and the inobtrusive quiet soul who digged her noiseless way so perseveringly through that rugged Paraguay mine. How she Dobrizhoffered it all out, it puzzles my slender Latinity to conjecture. Why do you seem to sanc-

tion Landor's unfeeling allegorising away of honest Quixote! He may as well say Strap is meant to symbolise the Scottish nation before the Union, and Random since that act of dubious issue; or that Partridge means the Mystical Man, and Lady Bellaston typifies the Woman upon Many Waters. Gebir, indeed, may mean the state of the hop markets last month, for anything I know to the contrary. That all Spain overflowed with romancical books (as Madge Newcastle calls them) was no reason that Cervantes should not smile at the matter of them; nor even a reason that, in another mood, he might not multiply them, deeply as he was tinctured with the essence of them. Quixote is the father of gentle ridicule, and at the same time the very depository and treasury of chivalry and highest notions. Marry, when somebody persuaded Cervantes that he meant only fun, and put him upon writing that unfortunate Second Part with the confederacies of that unworthy duke and most contemptible duchess, Cervantes sacrificed his instinct to his understanding.

We got your little book but last night, being at Enfield, to which place we came about a month since, and are having quiet holydays. Mary walks her twelve miles a day some days, and I my twenty on others. 'T is all holyday with me now, you know. The change works admirably.

For literary news, in my poor way, I have a one-act farce going to be acted at the Haymarket; but

when? is the question. 'T is an extravaganza, and like enough to follow *Mr. H.* The *London Magazine* has shifted its publishers once more, and I shall shift myself out of it. It is fallen. My ambition is not at present higher than to write nonsense for the playhouses, to eke out a somewhat contracted income. *Tempus erat.* There was a time, my dear Cornwallis, when the Muse, etc. But I am now in Mac Fleckno's predicament,—

"Promised a play, and dwindled to a farce."

Coleridge is better (was, at least, a few weeks since) than he has been for years. His accomplishing his book at last has been a source of vigour to him. We are on a half visit to his friend Allsop, at a Mrs. Leishman's, Enfield, but expect to be at Colebrook Cottage in a week or so, where, or anywhere, I shall be always most happy to receive tidings from you. G. Dyer is in the height of an uxorious paradise. His honeymoon will not wane till he wax cold. Never was a more happy pair since Acme and Septimius, and longer. Farewell, with many thanks, dear S. Our loves to all round your Wrekin.

Your old friend, C. LAMB.

TO HONE—MANNING

LETTER CCXCI

TO WILLIAM HONE

September 30, 1825.

DEAR H.—I came home in a week from Enfield, worse than I went. My sufferings have been intense, but are abating. I begin to know what a little sleep is. My sister has sunk under her anxieties about me. She is laid up, deprived of reason for many weeks to come, I fear. She is in the same house, but we do not meet. It makes both worse. I can just hobble down as far as the "Angel" once a day; further kills me. When I can stretch to Copenh[agen] Street I will. If you come this way any morning, I can only just shake you by the hand. This gloomy house does not admit of making my friends welcome. You have come off triumphant with Bartholomew Fair.

Yours (writ with difficulty), C. LAMB.

Mr. Hone,
Ludgate Hill.

LETTER CCXCII

TO THOMAS MANNING

December 10, 1825.

MY DEAR M.—We have had sad ups and downs since you saw us, but we are at present *in* untroubled waters though not *by* them, for our old

New River has taken a jaundice of the muds and rains, and looks as yellow as Miss ——.

Your red trunk (not *hose*, tho' a flame-coloured pair was once esteemed a luxury) is safe deposited at the Peacock, who by the by is worth your seeing. She has had her tail brushed up, and looks as pert as *A-goose* with a hundred eyes in *My*-thology: I don't know what *yours* says of it. Your gown will be at the Bell, Totteridge, by the Telegraph on Monday; time enough, I hope, to go out to the curate's to an early Tea in it. We have a corner at *double dumbee* for you, whenever you are disposed to change your Inn.

Believe us, yours as ever,

CHARLES AND MARY LAMB.

From Colebrook, this Saturday,
the 10th of December 1825.

LETTER CCXCIII

TO CHARLES OLLIER

Colebrook Cottage, Colebrook Row,
Tuesday [*January 1826*].

DEAR OLLIER—I send you two more proverbs, which will be the last of this batch, unless I send you one more by the post on THURSDAY; none will come after that day; so do not leave any open room in that case. Hood sups with me to-night. Can you come and eat grouse? 'T is not often I offer at delicacies.

Yours most kindly, C. LAMB.

LETTER CCXCIV

January 1826.

DEAR O.—We lamented your absence last night. The grouse were piquant: the backs incomparable. You must come in to cold mutton and oysters some evening. Name your evening; though I have qualms at the distance. Do you never leave early? My head is very queerish, and indisposed for much company; but we will get Hood, that half Hogarth, to meet you. The scrap I send should come in AFTER the "Rising with the Lark."

Yours truly.

Colburn, I take it, pays postages.

LETTER CCXCV

TO BERNARD BARTON

February 7, 1826.

DEAR B. B.—I got your book not more than five days ago, so am not so negligent as I must have appeared to you with a fortnight's sin upon my shoulders. I tell you with sincerity, that I think you have completely succeeded in what you intended to do. What is poetry may be disputed. These are poetry, to me at least. They are concise, pithy, and moving. Uniform as they are, and untristorify'd, I read them through at two sittings, without one sensation approaching to tedium. I do not know that among your many kind presents of this nature, this

is not my favourite volume. The language is never lax, and there is a unity of design and feeling. You wrote them *with love*—to avoid the cox-*combical* phrase, *con amore*. I am particularly pleased with the "Spiritual Law," pages 34 and 35. It reminded me of Quarles, and "holy Mr. Herbert," as Izaak Walton calls him; the two best, if not only, of our devotional poets, though some prefer Watts, and some *Tom Moore*. I am far from well, or in my right spirits, and shudder at pen-and-ink work. I poke out a monthly crudity for Colburn in his magazine, which I call "Popular Fallacies," and periodically crush a proverb or two, setting up my folly against the wisdom of nations. Do you see the *New Monthly?*

One word I must object to in your little book, and it recurs more than once—*fadeless* is no genuine compound; loveless is, because love is a noun as well as verb; but what is a fade? And I do not quite like whipping the Greek drama upon the back of "Genesis," page 8. I do not like praise handed in by disparagement; as I objected to a side censure on Byron, etc., in the "Lines on Bloomfield." With these poor cavils excepted, your verses are without a flaw.

C. Lamb.

LETTER CCXCVI

March 20, 1826.

DEAR B. B.—You may know my letters by the paper and the folding. For the former, I live on scraps obtained in charity from an old friend,

whose stationery is a permanent perquisite; for folding, I shall do it neatly when I learn to tie my neckcloths. I surprise most of my friends by writing to them on ruled paper, as if I had not got past pothooks and hangers. Sealing-wax, I have none on my establishment; wafers of the coarsest bran supply its place. When my epistles come to be weighed with Pliny's, however superior to the Roman in delicate irony, judicious reflections, etc., his gilt post will bribe over the judges to him. All the time I was at the E. I. H. I never mended a pen; I now cut 'em to the stumps, marring rather than mending the primitive goose-quill. I cannot bear to pay for articles I used to get for nothing. When Adam laid out his first penny upon nonpareils at some stall in Mesopotamos, I think it went hard with him, reflecting upon his old goodly orchard, where he had so many for nothing. When I write to a great man at the Court end, he opens with surprise upon a naked note, such as Whitechapel people interchange, with no sweet degrees of envelope. I never enclosed one bit of paper in another, nor understood the rationale of it. Once only I sealed with borrowed wax, to set Walter Scott a wondering, signed with the imperial quartered arms of England, which my friend Field gives in compliment to his descent, in the female line, from Oliver Cromwell. It must have set his antiquarian curiosity upon watering. To your questions upon the currency, I refer you to Mr. Robinson's last speech, where, if you can find a solution, I

can not. I think this, though, the best ministry we ever stumbled upon;—gin reduced four shillings in the gallon, wine two shillings in the quart! This comes home to men's minds and bosoms. My tirade against visitors was not meant *particularly* at you or A. K——. I scarce know what I meant, for I do not just now feel the grievance. I wanted to make an *article*. So in another thing I talked of somebody's *insipid wife*, without a correspondent object in my head: and a good lady, a friend's wife, whom I really *love* (don't startle, I mean in a licit way), has looked shyly on me ever since. The blunders of personal application are ludicrous. I send out a character every now and then, on purpose to exercise the ingenuity of my friends. "Popular Fallacies" will go on; that word "concluded" is an erratum, I suppose, for "continued." I do not know how it got stuffed in there. A little thing without name will also be printed on the Religion of the Actors, but it is out of your way, so I recommend you, with true author's hypocrisy, to skip it. We are about to sit down to roast beef, at which we could wish A. K., B. B., and B. B.'s pleasant daughter to be humble partakers. So much for my hint at visitors, which was scarcely calculated for droppers-in from Woodbridge; the sky does not drop such larks every day. My very kindest wishes to you all three, with my sister's best love.

C. Lamb.

TO COLERIDGE

LETTER CCXCVII

TO SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

March 22, 1826.

DEAR COLERIDGE—We will with great pleasure be with you on Thursday in the next week early. May we venture to bring Emma with us? Your finding out my style in your nephew's pleasant book is surprising to me. I want eyes to descry it. You are a little too hard upon his morality, though I confess he has more of Sterne about him than of Sternhold. But he saddens into excellent sense before the conclusion. Your query shall be submitted to Miss Kelly, though it is obvious that the pantomime, when done, will be more easy to decide upon than in proposal. I say, do it by all means. I have Decker's play by me, if you can filch anything out of it. Miss Gray, with her kitten eyes, is an actress, though she shows it not at all; and pupil to the former, whose gestures she mimics in comedy to the disparagement of her own natural manner, which is agreeable. It is funny to see her bridling up her neck, which is native to F. K.; but there is no setting the manners of others upon one's shoulders any more than their head. I am glad you esteem Manning, though you see but his husk or shrine. He discloses not, save to select worshippers, and will leave the world without any one hardly but me knowing how stupendous a creature he is. I am perfecting myself in the "Ode to Eton College" against Thurs-

day, that I may not appear unclassic. I have just discovered that it is much better than the "Elegy."

In haste, C. L.

P. S.—I do not know what to say to your *latest* theory about Nero being the Messiah, though by all accounts he was a 'nointed one.

LETTER CCXCVIII

TO THE REV. H. F. CARY

April 3, 1826.

DEAR SIR—It is whispered me that you will not be unwilling to look into our doleful hermitage. Without more preface, you will gladden our cell by accompanying our old chums of the *London*, Darley and A[llan] C[unningham], to Enfield on Wednesday. You shall have hermit's fare, with talk as seraphical as the novelty of the divine life will permit, with an innocent retrospect to the world which we have left, when I will thank you for your hospitable offer at Chiswick, and with plain hermit reasons evince the necessity of abiding here.

Without hearing from you, then, you shall give us leave to expect you. I have long had it on my conscience to invite you, but spirits have been low; and I am indebted to chance for this awkward but most sincere invitation.

Yours, with best loves to Mrs. Cary,

C. LAMB.

D. knows all about the coaches. Oh for a Museum in the wilderness!

LETTER CCXCIX

TO VINCENT NOVELLO

May 9, 1826.

DEAR N.—You will not expect us to-morrow, I am sure, while these damn'd North-Easters continue. We must wait the Zephyrs' pleasure. By the bye, I was at Highgate on Wednesday, the only one of the party.

Yours truly, C. LAMB.

Summer, as my friend Coleridge waggishly writes, has set in with its usual severity.

Kind remembces. to Mrs. Novello, etc.

LETTER CCC

TO BERNARD BARTON

May 16, 1826.

DEAR B. B.—I have had no spirits lately to begin a letter to you, though I am under obligations to you (how many!) for your neat little poem. 'T is just what it professes to be, a simple tribute, in chaste verse, serious and sincere.

I do not know how friends will relish it, but we outlyers, honorary friends, like it very well. I have had my head and ears stuffed up with the East winds: a continual ringing in my brain of bells jangled, or

the spheres touched by some raw angel. Is it not George the Third trying the Hundredth Psalm? I get my music for nothing. But the weather seems to be softening, and will thaw my stunnings. Coleridge, writing to me a week or two since, begins his note—"Summer has set in with its usual severity." A cold Summer is all I know of disagreeable in cold. I do not mind the utmost rigour of real Winter, but these smiling hypocrites of Mays wither me to death. My head has been a ringing chaos, like the day the winds were made, before they submitted to the discipline of a weathercock, before the quarters were made. In the street, with the blended noises of life about me, I hear, and my head is lightened; but in a room the hubbub comes back, and I am deaf as a sinner. Did I tell you of a pleasant sketch Hood has done, which he calls—"*Very deaf indeed*"? It is of a good-natured stupid-looking old gentleman, whom a footpad has stopped, but for his extreme deafness cannot make him understand what he wants. The unconscious old gentleman is extending his ear-trumpet very complacently, and the fellow is firing a pistol into it to make him hear, but the ball will pierce his skull sooner than the report will reach his sensorium. I choose a very little bit of paper, for my ear hisses when I bend down to write. I can hardly read a book, for I miss that small soft voice which the idea of articulated words raises (almost imperceptibly to you) in a silent reader. I seem too deaf to see what I read. But with a touch or two of re-

turning zephyr my head will melt. What lies you poets tell about the May! It is the most ungenial part of the year. Cold crocuses, cold primroses, you take your blossoms in ice—a painted sun.

> "Unmeaning joy around appears,
> And Nature smiles as if she sneers."

It is ill with me when I begin to look which way the wind sets. Ten years ago, I literally did not know the point from the broad end of the vane, which it was that indicated the quarter. I hope these ill winds have blown *over* you as they do through me.

Kindest remembrances to you and yours.

C. L.

LETTER CCCI

TO SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

June 1, 1826.

DEAR COLERIDGE—If I know myself, nobody more detests the display of personal vanity, which is implied in the act of sitting for one's picture, than myself. But the fact is, that the likeness which accompanies this letter was stolen from my person at one of my unguarded moments by some too partial artist, and my friends are pleased to think that he has not much flattered me. Whatever its merits may be, you, who have so great an interest in the original, will have a satisfaction in tracing the features of one that has so long esteemed you.

There are times when in a friend's absence these graphic representations of him almost seem to bring back the man himself. The painter, whoever he was, seems to have taken me in one of those disengaged moments, if I may so term them, when the native character is so much more honestly displayed than can be possible in the restraints of an enforced sitting attitude. Perhaps it rather describes me as a thinking man, than a man in the act of thought. Whatever its pretensions, I know it will be dear to you, towards whom I should wish my thoughts to flow in a sort of an undress rather than in the more studied graces of diction.

I am, dear Coleridge, yours sincerely,

C. LAMB.

LETTER CCCII

TO J. B. DIBDIN

Friday, some day in June, 1826.

DEAR D.—My first impulse upon opening your letter was pleasure at seeing your old neat hand, nine parts gentlemanly with a modest dash of the clerical: my second, a Thought, natural enough this hot weather—am I to answer all this? Why 't is as long as those to the Ephesians and Galatians put together, I have counted the words for curiosity. . . . I never knew an enemy to puns who was not an ill-natured man. Your fair critic in the coach reminds me of a Scotchman who assured me he did

not see much in Shakspeare. I replied, I dare say *not.* He felt the equivoke, looked awkward and reddish, but soon returned to the attack by saying that he thought Burns was as good as Shakspeare. I said that I had no doubt he was—to a *Scotchman.* We exchanged no more words that day. Your account of the fierce faces in the Hangings, with the presumed interlocution of the Eagle and the Tiger, amused us greatly. You cannot be so very bad while you can pick mirth off from rotten walls. But let me hear you have escaped out of your oven. . . . Your business, I take it, is bathing, not baking.

Let me hear that you have clambered up to Lover's Seat: it is as fine in that neighbourhood as Juan Fernandez—as lonely, too, when the Fishing-boats are not out; I have sat for hours, staring upon a shipless sea. The salt sea is never so grand as when it is left to itself. One cock-boat spoils it—a sea-mew or two improves it. And go to the little church which is a very Protestant Loretto, and seems dropt by some angel for the use of a hermit who was at once parishioner and a whole parish. It is not too big. Go in the night; bring it away in your portmanteau, and I will plant it in my garden. It must have been erected in the very infancy of British Christianity, for the two or three first converts; yet with it all the appertances of a church of the first magnitude—its pulpit, its pews, its baptismal font; a cathedral in a nut-shell. Seven people would crowd it like a Caledonian Chapel. The minister that divides the

Word there must give lumping pennyworths. It is built to the text of "two or three assembled in my name." It reminds me of the grain of mustard seed. If the glebe-land is proportionate it may yield two potatoes. Tithes out of it could be no more split than a hair. Its First fruits must be its Last, for 't would never produce a couple. It is truly the strait and narrow way, and few there be (of London visitants) that find it. The still small voice is surely to be found there, if anywhere. A sounding-board is merely there for ceremony. It is secure from earthquakes, not more from sanctity than size, for 't would feel a mountain thrown upon it no more than a taper-worm would. *Go and see, but not without your spectacles.* By the way, there 's a capital farm-house two-thirds of the way to the Lover's Seat, with incomparable plum cake, ginger-beer, etc. Mary bids me warn you not to read the *Anatomy of Melancholy* in your present *low way.* You 'll fancy yourself a pipkin or a headless bear, as Burton speaks of. You 'll be lost in a maze of remedies for a labyrinth of diseasements—a plethora of cures. Read Fletcher; above all the *Spanish Curate*, the *Thief, or Little Night Walker*, the *Wit Without Money*, and the *Lover's Pilgrimage.* Laugh and come home fat. Neither do we think Sir T. Browne quite the thing for you just at present. Fletcher is as light as soda-water. Browne and Burton are too strong potions for an Invalid. And don't thumb and dirt the books. Take care of the bindings. Lay a leaf of silver

paper under 'em as you read them. And don't smoke tobacco over 'em—the leaves will fall in and burn or dirty their namesakes. If you find any dusty atoms of the Indian Weed crumbled up in the Beaumont and Fletcher, they are *mine*. But then, you know, so is the Folio also. A pipe and a comedy of Fletcher's the last thing of a night is the best recipe for light dreams, and to scatter away Nightmares. *Probatum est.* But do as you like about the former. Only, cut the Baker's. You will come home else all crust; Rankings must chip you before you can appear in his counting-house. And, my dear Peter Fin Junr., do contrive to see the sea at least once before you return. You 'll be asked about it in the Old Jewry. It will appear singular not to have seen it. And rub up your Muse—the family Muse—and send us a rhyme or so. Don't waste your wit upon that damned Dry Salter. I never knew but one Dry Salter who could relish those mellow effusions, and he broke. You knew Tommy Hill, the wittiest of Dry Salters. Dry Salters! what a word for this thirsty weather! I must drink after it. Here 's to thee, my dear Dibdin, and to our having you again snug and well at Colebrooke. But our nearest hopes are to hear again from you shortly. An epistle only a quarter as agreeable as your last would be a treat.

Yours most truly, C. LAMB.

Timothy B. Dibdin, Esq.,
No. 9, Blucher Row,
Priory, Hastings.

LETTER CCCIII

July 14, 1826.

BECAUSE you boast poetic grandsire,
And rhyming kin, both uncle *and* sire,
Dost think that none but *their* descendings
Can tickle folks with double endings?
I had a Dad that would for half a bet
Have put down thine thro' half the alphabet.
Thou who would be Dan Prior the Second,
For Dan Posterior must be reckoned.
In faith, dear Tim, your rhymes are slovenly,
As a man may say, dough-baked and ovenly;
Tedious and long as two Long Acres,
And smell most vilely of the Baker's.
(I have been cursing every limb o' thee,
Because I could not hitch in *Timothy.*
Jack, Will, Tom, Dick 's a serious evil,
But Tim, plain Tim 's the very Devil.)
Thou most incorrigible scribbler,
Right Watering Place and Cockney Dribbler,
What *child*, that barely understands *A*
B C, would ever dream that stanza
Would tinkle into rhyme with "Plan, Sir"?
Go, go—you are not worth an answer.
I had a sire, that at plain Crambo
Had hit you o'er the head a damn'd blow.
How now? may I die game, and you die brass,
But I had stol'n a quip from Hudibras!
'T was thinking on that fine old suttler,

That was in faith a second Butler;
Had as queer rhymes as he, and subtler.
He would have put you to 't this weather
For rattling syllables together.
Rhymed you to death, like "rats in Ireland,"
Except that he was born in High'r Land.
His chimes, not cramped like thine, and rung ill,
Had made Job split his sides on dunghill.
There was no limit to his merryings
At christ'nings, weddings, nay at buryings.
No undertaker would live near him,
Those grave practitioners did fear him;
Mutes, at his merry mops, turned "vocal,"
And fellows, hired for silence, "spoke all."
No *body* could be laid in cavity
Long as he lived, with proper gravity.
His mirth-fraught eye had but to glitter,
And every mourner round must titter.
The Parson, prating of Mount Hermon,
Stood still to laugh in midst of sermon.
The final sexton (smile he *must* for him)
Could hardly get to "dust to dust" for him.
He lost three pall-bearers their livelihood,
Only with simpering at his lively mood:
Provided that they fresh and neat came,
All jests were fish that to his net came.
He 'd banter Apostolic castings
As you jeer fishermen at Hastings.
When the fly bit, *like me*, he leapt o'er all,
And stood not much on what was Scriptural.

P.S. I had forgot, at Small Bohemia *
(Enquire the way of your maid, Euphemia)
Are sojourning, of all good fellows
The prince and princess, the *Novellos.*
Pray seek 'em out, and give my love to 'em;
You 'll find you 'll soon be hand and glove to 'em.

C. L.

* In prose, Little Bohemia, about a mile from Hastings in the Hollington Road, when you can get as far. This letter will introduce you, if 't is agreeable. Take a donkey—'t is Novello the Composer and his wife, our very good friends. Dear Dib, I find relief in a word or two of prose. In truth my rhymes come slow. You have "routh of 'em." It gives us pleasure to find you keep your good spirits. Your letter did us good. Pray Heaven you are got out at last. Write quickly.

For Tim Dibdin,
At No. 4 Meadow Cottages,
Hastings.

LETTER CCCIV

TO WILLIAM HONE

[*Enfield, July 25, 1826.*]

DEAR H.—The Quotidian came in as pleasantly as it was looked for at breakfast time yesterday. You have repaid my poor stanzas with interest. This last interlineation is one of those instances of affectation rightly applied. Read the

sentence without it, how bald it is! Your idea of "worsted in the dog-days" was capital.

We are here so comfortable that I am confident we shall stay one month, from this date, most probably longer; so if you please, you can cut your out-of-town room for that time. I have sent up my petit farce altered; and Harley is at the theatre now. It cannot come out for some weeks. When it does, we think not of leaving her, but to borrow a bed of you for the night.

I write principally to say that the 4th of August is coming,—Dogget's Coat and Badge Day on the water. You will find a good deal about him in *Cibber's Apology*, octavo, facing the window; and something haply in a thin blackish quarto among the plays, facing the fireside.

You have done with mad dogs; else there is a print of Rowlandson's, or somebody's, of people in pursuit of one in a village, which might have come in: also Goldsmith's verses.

Mary's kind remembrance. C. Lamb.

Mr. Hone,
Colebrook Cottage,
Islington.

LETTER CCCV

TO J. B. DIBDIN

Saturday, September 9, 1826.

An answer is requested.

DEAR D.—I have observed that a Letter is never more acceptable than when received upon a rainy day, especially a rainy Sunday; which moves me to send you somewhat, however short. This will find you sitting after Breakfast, which you will have prolonged as far as you can with consistency to the poor handmaid that has the reversion of the Tea Leaves; making two nibbles of your last morsel of *stale* roll (you cannot have hot new ones on the Sabbath), and reluctantly coming to an end, because when that is done, what can you do till dinner? You cannot go to the Beach, for the rain is drowning the sea, turning rank Thetis fresh, taking the brine out of Neptune's pickles, while mermaids sit upon rocks with umbrellas, their ivory combs sheathed for spoiling in the wet of waters foreign to them. You cannot go to the Library, for it 's shut. You are not religious enough to go to Church. O it is worth while to cultivate piety to the gods, to have something to fill the heart up on a wet Sunday. You cannot cast accounts, for your Ledger is being eaten up with moths in the Ancient Jewry. You cannot play at Draughts, for there is none to play with you, and besides there is not a draught-board in the house.

You cannot go to market, for it closed last night. You cannot look into the shops, their backs are shut upon you. You cannot while away an hour with a friend, for you have no friend round that Wrekin. You cannot divert yourself with a stray acquaintance, for you have picked none up. You cannot bear the chiming of Bells, for they invite you to a banquet where you are no visitant. You cannot cheer yourself with the prospect of to-morrow's letter, for none come on Mondays. You cannot count those endless vials on the mantelpiece with any hope of making a variation in their numbers. You have counted your spiders: your Bastile is exhausted. You sit and deliberately curse your hard exile from all familiar sights and sounds. Old Ranking poking in his head unexpectedly would just now be as good to you as Grimaldi. Anything to deliver you from this intolerable weight of ennui. You are too ill to shake it off: not ill enough to submit to it, and to lie down as a Lamb under it. The Tyranny of sickness is nothing to the cruelty of Convalescence: 't is to have Thirty Tyrants for one. That pattering rain drops on your brain. You 'll be worse after dinner, for you must dine at one to-day that Betty may go to afternoon service. She insists upon having her chopped hay. And then when she goes out, who *was* something to you, something to speak to—what an interminable afternoon you 'll have to go thro'. You can't break yourself from your locality: you cannot say, "to-morrow morning I set off for Banstead," for

you are booked for Wednesday. Foreseeing this, I thought a *cheerful letter* would come in opportunely. If any of the little topics for mirth I have thought upon should serve you in this utter extinguishment of sunshine, to make you a little merry, I shall have had my ends. I love to make things comfortable. . . . That which is scratched out was the most material thing I had to say, but on maturer thoughts I defer it.

P. S.—We are just sitting down to dinner with a pleasant party—Coleridge, Reynolds the dramatist, and Sam Bloxam: to-morrow (that is, *to-day*), Liston and Wyat of the Wells, dine with us. May this find you as jolly and freakish as we mean to be.

C. LAMB.

Addressed—
T. Dibdin, Esq.,
4 Meadow Cottages,
Hastings.

LETTER CCCVI

TO BERNARD BARTON

September 26, 1826.

DEAR B. B.—I don't know why I have delayed so long writing. 'T was a fault. The undercurrent of excuse to my mind was that I had heard of the vessel in which Mitford's jars were to come; that it had been obliged to put into Batavia to refit (which accounts for its delay), but was daily expected. Days are past, and it comes not, and the

mermaids may be drinking their tea out of his china for aught I know; but let 's hope not. In the meantime I have paid £28, etc., for the freight and prime cost, which I a little expected he would have settled in London. But do not mention it. I was enabled to do it by a receipt of £30 from Colburn, with whom, however, I have done. I should else have run short; for I only just make ends meet. We will wait the arrival of the trinkets, and to ascertain their full expense, and then bring in the bill. Don't mention it, for I daresay 't was mere thoughtlessness. I am sorry you and yours have any plagues about dross matters. I have been sadly puzzled at the defalcation of more than one-third of my income, out of which when entire I saved nothing. But cropping off wine, old books, etc. etc., in short, all that can be called pocket-money, I hope to be able to go on at the cottage. Remember, I beg of you not to say anything to Mitford, for if he be honest it will vex him: if not, which I as little expect as that you should be, I have a hank still upon the jars.

Colburn had something of mine in last month, which he has had in hand these seven months, and had lost, or could n't find room for: I was used to different treatment in the *London*, and have foresworn periodicals. I am going thro' a course of reading at the Museum: the Garrick plays, out of part of which I formed my specimens. I have two thousand to go thro'; and in a few weeks have despatched the tythe of 'em. It is a sort of office to me; hours,

ten to four, the same. It does me good. Man must have regular occupation, that has been used to it.

So A. K. keeps a school; she teaches nothing wrong, I 'll answer for 't. I have a Dutch print of a schoolmistress; little old-fashioned Fleminglings, with only one face among them. She a princess of a schoolmistress, wielding a rod for form more than use; the scene, an old monastic chapel, with a Madonna over her head, looking just as serious, as thoughtful, as pure, as gentle as herself. 'T is a type of thy friend.

Will you pardon my neglect? Mind, again I say, don't show this to M.; let me wait a little longer to know the event of his luxuries. I am sure he is a good fellow, tho' I made a serious Yorkshire lad stare when I said he was a clergyman. He is a pleasant layman spoiled. Heaven send him his jars uncrack'd, and me my ——

Yours, with kindest wishes to your daughter and friend, in which Mary joins, C. L.

LETTER CCCVII

[End of 1826.]

DEAR B. B. (the *Busy Bee*, as Hood after Dr. Watts apostrophises thee, and well dost thou deserve it for thy labours in the Muses' gardens, wandering over parterres of Think-on-mes and Forget-me-nots, to a total impossibility of forgetting thee), thy letter was acceptable, thy scruples may be dis-

missed, thou art *rectus in curiâ*, not a word more to be said, *verbum sapienti*, and so forth, the matter is decided with a white stone, classically, mark me, and the apparitions vanish'd which haunted me, only the cramp, Caliban's distemper, clawing me in the calvish part of my nature, makes me ever and anon roar bullishly, squeak cowardishly, and limp cripple-ishly. Do I write quakerly and simply, 't is my most Master Mathew's like intention to do it. See Ben Jonson.—I think you told me your acquaintance with the Drama was confin'd to Shakspeare and Miss Baillie: some read only Milton and Croly. The gap is as from an ananas to a turnip. I have fighting in my head the plots, characters, situations, and sentiments of 400 old plays (bran new to me) which I have been digesting at the Museum, and my appetite sharpens to twice as many more, which I mean to course over this Winter. I can scarce avoid dialogue fashion in this letter. I soliloquise my meditations, and habitually speak dramatic blank verse without meaning it. Do you see Mitford? He will tell you something of my labours. Tell him I am sorry to have missed seeing him, to have talked over those old Treasures. I am still more sorry for his missing Pots. But I shall be sure of the earliest intelligence of the Lost Tribes. His Sacred Specimens are a thankful addition to my shelves. Marry, I could wish he had been more careful of corrigenda. I have discover'd certain which have slipt his errata. I put 'em in the next page, as perhaps thou canst trans-

mit them to him; for what purpose but to grieve him (which yet I should be sorry to do), but then it shows my learning, and the excuse is complimentary, as it implies their correction in a future edition. His own things in the book are magnificent, and as an old Christ's Hospitaller I was particularly refresh'd with his eulogy on our Edward. Many of the choice excerpta were new to me. Old Christmas is a-coming, to the confusion of Puritans, Muggletonians, Anabaptists, Quakers, and that unwassailing crew. He cometh not with his wonted gait; he is shrunk nine inches in his girth, but is yet a lusty fellow. Hood's book is mighty clever, and went off 600 copies the first day. Sion's Songs do not disperse so quickly. The next leaf is for Rev. J. M. In this adieu, thine briefly, in a tall friendship,

C. Lamb.

NOTES

NOTES

CHAPTER IV. [1817—1823]

Letter CLXXXIII.

William Ayrton (1777–1858), Director of the Music at the King's Theatre in 1816. Famous as an impresario and as a musical critic. He edited Charles Knight's *Musical Library*, which did so much to popularise the best composers in this country. He was the first to produce *Don Giovanni* in England, in April of this year.

The late Mr. Mellish. Mr. Mellish, of Enfield, for many years M. P. for Middlesex. He made a large fortune as an army contractor. Whether he ever committed himself to opinions on poetical matters I do not know.

Letter CLXXXIV.

Mr. Barron Field; born 23rd October 1786; practised at the Bar for some years, going the Oxford Circuit. In 1816 he married and went out to New South Wales as Judge of the Supreme Court at Sydney. He returned to England in 1824, having resigned his post, and was afterwards appointed Chief-Justice of Gibraltar. See the Elia Essay, "Distant Correspondents." "Botany Bay" is now so much a matter of history that Lamb's allusions to the criminal population, among whom he pictures his old friend as living, almost require explanation.

> "So thievish 't is, that the eighth commandment itself
> Scarce seemeth there to be"

is of course a parody of Coleridge's lines in the "Ancient Mariner"—

> "So lonely 't was that God Himself
> Scarce seemèd there to be."

The reader will not have much difficulty in separating the

"lies," to which Lamb pleads guilty in the various pieces of intelligence here transmitted, from the truths. If the Mitchell mentioned was Thomas Mitchell, the translator of Aristophanes, he did not die till many years later, and Mr. Thomas Barnes became the famous editor of the *Times* instead of going to Demerara or Essequibo. George Dyer, on the other hand, was actually one of the six executors and residuary legatees under the will of Lord Stanhope. "Mr. Lawrey" was the Rev. Walter Lawry, a Wesleyan minister (*Bibliotheca Cornub.* vols. i. and iii.).

Letter CLXXXV.

We have left the Temple. Lamb and his sister had lived for about nine years in Mitre Court Buildings, and for about the same period in Inner Temple Lane.

Letter CLXXXVII.

The Garden of England, Covent Garden.

Southey's curse. The *Curse of Kehama.*

Coleridge's state and affairs. The new course of lectures, here spoken of as contemplated by Coleridge, were delivered early in the year following at a lecture-room in Flower de Luce Court, Fleet Street.

Letter CLXXXVIII.

This brief note is worth printing, because it led to the remarkable evening at Haydon's, when Lamb met Keats, Wordsworth, and the Comptroller of Stamps. See Haydon's *Diaries*, or my *Memoir of Lamb.*

Letter CLXXXIX.

W. H. goes on lecturing against W. W. Hazlitt's Lectures on the English Poets, delivered at the Surrey Institution.

NOTES

Letter CXC.

The "books" here referred to are the collected edition of Lamb's works in two volumes, published in 1818 by the Olliers. The letter to Southey that follows is also on the subject of the new publication.

Letter CXCII.

The "ticket" here mentioned was apparently for two courses of lectures delivered by Coleridge in December 1818 at the Crown and Anchor Tavern in the Strand.

Letter CXCIII.

To John Chambers. Mr. Chambers was a fellow-clerk with Lamb in the India House, and one of his most intimate friends in the office. This letter, formerly in the possession of the late Mr. George Bentley, of New Burlington Street, was first printed by me with his most kind permission. The circumstances under which this tissue of audacious invention and wildest humour was penned are not hard to divine. Mr. Chambers was clearly kept away from business by an attack of eczema, or some kindred affection of the skin, and Lamb, after a fashion of which there are many other instances, sits down to amuse the absent invalid by supplying him with material for a hearty laugh. The "intelligence" forwarded is of course the simplest romance, grounded in each case, we may suppose, on certain bodily or mental peculiarities in the office clerks respectively named. The anecdote of Mr. Bye's sonnets and their resemblance to Petrarch has been so often quoted from this letter, though unpublished, as to have become already historical. The few notes that follow are taken from some memoranda supplied by the late Mr. H. G. Bohn, from whose collection the letter passed into the hands of Mr. Bentley.

The letter is addressed to Mr. John Chambers, Leamington, Warwick.

As Venn would say. Mr. Venn was an auctioneer.

As D—— does before 12 o'Clock. "Mr. Dowley, who was clerk and office-assistant to Mr. Chambers."

Wadd and Plumley. Wadd was son of a Rev. Dr. Wadd; Plumley was the son of a silversmith on Ludgate Hill. *Hyde* was a clerk in the same office, familiarly called Old Jemmy Hyde. He claimed to be descended from Lord Chancellor Hyde. *Friend* "eventually became chief clerk when the Company passed into the hands of the Government." *Bye*, "another clerk in the same office, and held to be very stupid; got into debt and was dismissed." See Letter to Manning of 28th May 1819. Mr. Bohn adds that "this letter is evidently complete although it ends abruptly and is not signed."

Letter CXCIV.

A copy of "Peter Bell." The verses to which Lamb here refers were those which J. Hamilton Reynolds wrote and published a few days in advance of Wordsworth's "Peter Bell," in ridicule of the poet. The squib, issued from the publishing house of Taylor and Hessey, bore on its title-page, *Peter Bell: A Lyrical Ballad.* "I do affirm that I am the *real* Simon Pure." It consists of some fifty stanzas, roughly imitated from the actual metre of Wordsworth's poem. It was furnished with a prose Preface and Appendix. The opening lines of the former may be cited as giving some idea of the insolent spirit in which the whole *jeu d'esprit* was conceived:—"It is now a period of one-and-twenty years since I first wrote some of the most perfect compositions (except certain pieces I have written in my later days) that ever dropped from poetical pen. My heart hath been right and powerful all its years. I never thought an evil or a weak thought in my life. It has been my aim and my achievement to deduce moral thunder from buttercups, daisies, celandines, and (as a poet, scarcely inferior to myself, hath it) 'such small deer,'" etc. etc. etc. The verses

that follow are composed by stringing together allusions to Alice Fell, Betty Foy, Harry Gill, and other names from Wordsworth's best-known ballads, with phrases and mannerisms borrowed from the more mawkish of his earlier poems. It may be added that it was the publication of this *first* "Peter Bell," to which Wordsworth's came *second*, that explains Shelley writing a "Peter Bell the *Third*."

Rogers has been re-writing your Poem of the Strid. Rogers wrote a poem on the same incident as that of Wordsworth's "Force of Prayer: or, The Founding of Bolton Priory." Rogers's poem was called "The Boy of Egremond," and the first two lines of it—

> "'Say what remains when Hope is fled?'
> She answered, 'Endless weeping,'"

were, in some later editions of Wordsworth's poems, prefixed as a motto to his "Force of Prayer."

How do you like my way of writing with two inks? This letter was actually so written, in lines of black and red ink alternately.

Letter CXCV.

The Gladmans of Wheathamstead. Lamb had relations in Hertfordshire, where his grandmother, Mrs. Field, resided so long. See the Essay, "Mackery End in H——shire," and notes upon it, in my edition of *Elia*.

Tommy Bye. See preceding letter to Mr. Chambers. Mrs. Gold was the married name of Miss Burrell, the actress. Manning was now once more in England after his long absence in China. This letter was addressed to him at Ware in Hertfordshire.

Letter CXCVI.

How proud we are here of the dedication. Wordsworth had just published his early poem "The Waggoner," in compliance with

Lamb's request made in a former letter. It appeared, with a few shorter poems, in 1819, with the following dedication to Lamb:—

"My dear Friend—When I sent you, a few weeks ago, 'The Tale of Peter Bell,' you asked 'Why "The Waggoner" was not added?' To say the truth, from the higher tone of imagination, and the deeper touches of passion aimed at in the former, I apprehended this little piece could not accompany it without disadvantage. In the year 1806, if I am not mistaken, 'The Waggoner' was read to you in manuscript, and as you have remembered it for so long a time, I am the more encouraged to hope that, since the localities on which the poem partly depends did not prevent its being interesting to you, it may prove acceptable to others. Being, therefore, in some measure the cause of its present appearance, you must allow me the gratification of inscribing it to you, in acknowledgment of the pleasure I have derived from your writings, and of the high esteem with which

"I am very truly yours,

"William Wordsworth."

Benjamin is the waggoner's name.

Mary Sabilla Novello. The wife of Vincent Novello, the eminent composer and organist.

Letter CXCVII.

This letter to Lamb's old friend Joseph Cottle, publisher and poet of Bristol, has, I venture to think, an interesting history attached to it. This and the following two letters were first printed by Cottle in his *Early Recollections of Coleridge*, published in 1837. Cottle gave the date of the first two correctly (1819), but by some oversight dated the last of the three 1829. Recent editors have made the error complete by dating them all 1829. Accordingly, in the autumn of 1886, when engaged

in arranging the Letters for my new edition, I was perplexed by this confusion of dates, and could discover no internal evidence in the Letters themselves to resolve my doubts. A recent editor of Lamb's Correspondence had confidently announced that the Collection of Likenesses of British Bards was a certain work called *Effigies Poeticæ*, being a set of portraits of distinguished English Poets, with short notices of their lives and works, which was not in fact issued till the year 1824. This work (the letterpress of which, issued anonymously, was by Barry Cornwall) only included poets already deceased, and therefore did not contain any portrait or notice of Joseph Cottle. When I had given up hope of finding any clue to the mystery, the actual volume indicated by Lamb came to light. It proved to be a copy of Byron's *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*, profusely illustrated with engravings and drawings of the various poets and other literary characters occurring in the famous satire. My attention was called to the copy by its containing, as its solitary water-colour drawing, a hitherto unknown portrait of Charles Lamb, by Mr. Joseph, A.R.A.; but on examining the book further, I found that it contained also a pencil drawing of Joseph Cottle, evidently copied from a miniature. The date of the compilation, as given on a special title-page, was 1819, and the person by whom it was compiled, one William Evans. By inquiring from the latest possessor of the volume, I discovered that this Mr. Evans was Lamb's old friend of that name, a colleague in the India House, to whom Lamb owed his first introduction to Talfourd. Here then was beyond doubt the "particular friend" who was making a selection of the "Likenesses of Living Bards." That Lamb was perfectly well aware of the use Mr. Evans proposed to make of the portraits in question we cannot doubt; and we can imagine with what characteristic equanimity he was allowing his own portrait to appear in illustration of lines by Byron quite as scornful as those in which poor Cottle was described.

As Joseph Cottle, however, might not have received the intelligence with the same philosophic calm, Lamb did not think it necessary to inform his old friend of the precise destination of his portrait. Since I made known these facts in the columns of the *Athenæum*, Mr. Evans's volume has passed into the keeping of the British Museum.

Letter CXCVIII.

A daughter of Joseph's, R.A. The name of Mr. Joseph's daughter is appended to several of the drawings in Mr. Evans's volume, but by some oversight not to the likeness of Joseph Cottle, which was a copy from a miniature by Branwhite of Bristol. Mr. Joseph was an associate only of the Royal Academy. He never attained the full rank of R.A.

Your better favour, the "Messiah." "In consequence of this application," Cottle tells us, referring to the preceding letter of Lamb's, "I sent C. Lamb a portrait by Branwhite, and enclosed for his acceptance the second part of my *Messiah*." Cottle had published the first part of this Epic, "in twenty-four books," four years earlier. Lamb, as usual, hits with unerring skill one of the few lines in the dreary waste of commonplace that have some felicity of diction. Cottle had ruined the effect of the musical couplet—

> "The willowy brook was there, but that sweet sound—
> When to be heard again on earthly ground?"

by adding the feeble lines—

> "(While sorrow gave th' involuntary tear),
> Had ceased to vibrate on our listening ear."

Letter CXCIX.

Cottle's *Fall of Cambria*, in twenty-four books, was published in 1811.

Anything you should write against Lord Byron. Cottle had evidently informed Lamb of his "Expostulatory Epistle to

Lord Byron"—composed and published after the publication of the first two cantos of *Don Juan*. Of this effusion, in rhymed couplets, the following few lines may be given as a fair sample:—

"Sunk, but not lost, from dreams of death arise!
No longer tempt the patience of the skies!
Confess, with tears of blood, to frowning Heaven
The foul perversion of *His* talents given!
Retrace thy footsteps! Ere the wish be vain
Bring back the erring thousands in thy train!
Let none, at death, despairing charge on thee
Their blasted peace, in shuddering agony!
Their prop, their heart's last solace, rent away
That one *long night* might quench their *Perfect Day.*"

Letter CC.

Talfourd assigned this note to the year 1829, but it certainly belongs to the year 1819, for Coleridge's sonnet referred to, "Fancy in Nubibus: or the Poet in the Clouds," was first printed in *Blackwood's Magazine* in November 1819, and this copy was evidently sent to Lamb in manuscript and before publication. For the better enjoyment of this humorous letter I make no apology for reprinting the poem:—

"O! it is pleasant, with a heart at ease,
Just after sunset, or by moonlight skies,
To make the shifting clouds be what you please,
Or let the easily persuaded eyes
Own each quaint likeness issuing from the mould
Of a friend's fancy; or with head bent low
And cheek aslant see rivers flow of gold
'Twixt crimson banks; and then a traveller, go
From mount to mount through Cloudland, gorgeous land!
Or, listening to the tide, with closèd sight,
Be that blind bard, who on the Chian strand,
By those deep sounds possessed with inward light,
Beheld the Iliad and the Odyssee
Rise to the swelling of the voiceful sea."

NOTES

Letter CCI.

William Wordsworth, the third son of the poet, had just come to the school of the Charter House in London, and on this Wednesday half-holiday the Lambs had asked him to dinner.

A certain preface about imagination. The allusion is to Wordsworth's own lines in "The Leech-Gatherer," cited by him in the Preface to the 1815 edition of his Poems:—

> "Like a sea-beast crawled forth, that on a shelf
> Of rock or sand reposeth, there to sun itself."

It is perhaps impertinent to point out the exquisite allusion to the poet having "ever been on Westminster Bridge."

Letter CCII.

Some of Lloyd's lines on you. The "Stanzas addressed to * * *," in Lloyd's *Desultory Thoughts in London*, written this year.

Capel Lofft's. A sonnet dated from Manchester and signed C. L. had just appeared in a newspaper.

Your marine sonnet was Coleridge's sonnet, "Fancy in Nubibus—a sonnet composed on the sea-coast," which appeared in *Blackwood's Magazine* of November 1819. In the same number there is a note on Sir Thomas Browne by Coleridge, but not contributed by him. It is signed G. J.

Letter CCIII.

I have included this fragment of a letter because all Lamb's opinions of contemporary poetry are worth preserving. Wordsworth's "Duddon" sonnets had been published this year, and with them "Dion," "Artegal and Elidure," "The Pass of Kirkstone," "The Longest Day," and others.

Letters CCV and CCVI.

These letters were first printed in Mrs. Mathews's Memoir of her Husband in 1839 (vol. iii. p. 192). As they imply, Charles

and Mary Lamb had been invited to meet Charles Mathews, the elder, and his wife at the Gillmans. Mrs. Mathews gives an account of the dinner, from which the following sketch of Lamb's outward man is worth preserving:—"Mr. Lamb's first approach was not prepossessing. His figure was small and mean; and no man certainly was ever less beholden to his tailor. His 'bran' new suit of black cloth (in which he affected several times during the day to take great pride, and to cherish as a novelty that he had long looked for and wanted) was drolly contrasted with his very rusty silk stockings, shown from his knees, and his much too large *thick* shoes without polish. His shirt rejoiced in a wide ill-plaited frill, and his very small, tight, white neckcloth was hemmed to a fine point at the ends that formed part of the little bow. His hair was black and sleek, but not formal, and his face the gravest I ever saw, but indicating great intellect, and resembling very much the portraits of King Charles I. Mr. Coleridge was very anxious about his *pet* Lamb's first impression upon my husband, which I believe his friend saw; and guessing that he had been extolled, he mischievously resolved to thwart his panegyrist, disappoint the strangers, and altogether to upset the suspected plan of showing him off."

Master Mathew, a character in Ben Jonson's *Every Man in his Humour.*

Letter CCVII.

Mr. Collier had published in 1820 his "Poetical Decameron: or, Ten Conversations on English Poets and Poetry, particularly of the reigns of Elizabeth and James I."; and this is the work now acknowledged by Lamb. The discoveries about *Twelfth Night* were only as to the origin of the plot being found in a novel by Barnaby Rich. The reference to the comedy and its performance at the Temple in Manningham's *Diary*, had not as yet been discovered by Mr. Collier. Lamb's

allusion to *Osrades* is very curious. I feel no doubt that this is what he wrote in the letter, and that it was his imperfect recollection of the actual name, Rosader, the character corresponding to Shakspeare's Orlando in Lodge's *Rosalind*, the novel on which Shakspeare built his *As You Like It*. The speech of Rosader in addressing the Duke and company in the forest is one of those cited by Mr. Collier (vol. ii. p. 174). It begins, "Whatsoever thou be that art maister of these lustie squires, I salute thee as graciously as a man in extreme distresse may: knowe that I and a fellow friend of mine are here famished in the forrest for want of food: perish we must, unless relieved by thy favours."

The character of the Ass. A sixteenth-century tract entitled "The Nobleness of the Ass," discussed by Mr. Collier's three "Friends in Council," is here referred to (i. 168). Lamb contributed a short notice of it to his friend Hone's *Every-Day Book*. See *Mrs. Leicester's School*, etc.

The line you cannot appropriate. The line was—

"And weep the more because I weep in vain";

from Gray's sonnet on the death of his friend West.

You will find last poem but one. Morton, one of the speakers in Mr. Collier's *Decameron*, instances Sir P. Sidney and an epitaph written on him by Sir Walter Raleigh, in which, according to Harrington, he is called "The Scipio and the Petrarke of our time."

Letter CCVIII.

The "beautiful lines" here referred to were a copy of verses published in the *London Magazine* for August 1821, signed "Olen." They were entitled "Epistle to Elia: suggested by his Essay 'Molle atque facetum' on New Year's Eve." Lamb's essay had appeared in the number of the Magazine for the preceding January. See *Essays of Elia*. The poem was a grave

protest against the despondent and sceptical tone of Lamb's speculations on a future state of being. It is too long to give in its entirety, extending to nearly two hundred lines, but an extract may be cited in proof of the eloquent earnestness of the remonstrance. Speaking of the vagueness of Lamb's imaginings of the life to come, the writer goes on:—

> "No! never dream it:
> If thou but think this error, O redeem it.
> The same that shadowed the green, leafy dells,
> And gave them music sweeter than *thy bells*,
> Has furnished out thy Heaven by the sweet name
> Of *Paradise*. And thou, too, art the same:
> The soul that revelled in thy Burton's page
> Shall be alive with thee; the bard and sage
> Thou lovedst here, they wait but thy arrival;
> Thy death shall be a sleep, a self-survival.
> Yea, thou shalt stand in pause when thou hast set
> Thy foot upon heaven's threshold, and beget
> Effaced remembrances of forms and times,
> Greetings and partings in these earthly climes:
> And there shall come a rush upon thy brain
> Of recollected voices, a sweet pain
> Of sudden recognition; gentle stealings
> Of wakened memory—deep, voluptuous feelings,
> Pressures and kisses, that shall make thee start
> At thy own consciousness, and own, *Thou art.*"

Lamb, it will be seen, conjectured that the lines might be by James Montgomery. They were by the late Sir Charles Elton, of Clevedon Court, a frequent contributor at that time to the *London Magazine*, and were included by him in a volume, *Boyhood, and other Poems*, published in 1835.

This letter is doubly interesting, as revealing the origin of Lamb's famous signature. There is no sufficient reason for supposing the explanation fictitious; and Mr. Lowell's conjecture that Lamb owed it to the *Epistolæ Ho-Elianæ* of James Howell cannot seriously be entertained.

Letter CCIX.

The first of a series of letters to Cowden Clarke, which Mrs. Cowden Clarke most kindly placed at my disposal. It need hardly be explained that Mrs. Clarke was a daughter of Vincent Novello. Lamb was living just now in country lodgings at Dalston, and was not within easy reach of Leigh Hunt at Hampstead.

Letter CCX.

The first sketch of the famous "Roast Pig" Essay, which appeared in the *London Magazine* of the following September.

Letter CCXI.

Poor John's loss. Lamb's elder brother, John, had died in November of the previous year. Captain Burney died in the same month.

The foul enchanter —— "letters four do form his name." The quotation is from Coleridge's poem, "Fire, Famine, and Slaughter," where it is a paraphrase for Pitt. Here it is certainly intended for Joseph Hume, who had already established his fame as an Economical Reformer, and who the year before had cut down the salaries of the Distributors of Stamps, which directly affected Wordsworth.

Busirane is the name of an enchanter in the *Fairy Queen.* Hume was engaged in attacking the salaries, pensions, and superannuation allowances of the public service generally.

Milton hangs over my fireside. The portrait of Milton had come into Lamb's possession through the death of his brother John.

My meeting with Dodd. See the Essay on "Some of the Old Actors," then just printed in the *London.* The fortunes of this magazine were already waning.

Letter CCXII.

The Numberer of the People. Mr. Rickman first organised the machinery for taking the decennial census.

Letter CCXIV.

John Clare (1793–1864), the son of an agricultural labourer in Northamptonshire. He had published, through Taylor and Hessey, *Poems, descriptive of Rural Life and Scenery;* and later in the same year (1821), *The Village Minstrel, and other Poems.* These are the volumes, doubtless, which are acknowledged in this letter. Clare's verse appeared from time to time in the *London Magazine*, through which association he and Lamb had become acquainted.

The "sonnet" in the *London* for August referred to by Lamb was unsigned.

Since I saw you I have been in France. Charles and Mary Lamb left London in the middle of June 1822 for a holiday in Paris. They were for a while the guests of James Kenney, the dramatist, at Versailles. From an entry in Crabb Robinson's *Diary* we learn that they travelled in company with a French gentleman, and a nurse for Miss Lamb, in readiness for any return of her frequent illness. Charles Lamb was absent a month, but Mary Lamb remained at the Kenneys some time longer, returning to England on the 10th of September. See subsequent letters to Mrs. Kenney and to Barron Field.

Letter CCXV.

Bernard Barton. This is the earliest of the interesting series of letters to the Quaker poet, of Woodbridge, in Suffolk. Mr. Barton was clerk in the Bank of the Messrs. Alexander in that town. He was a contributor to the *London Magazine*, and Lamb had first met him at the hospitable table of the publishers, Messrs. Taylor and Hessey, who were in the habit of gathering their staff together at periodical dinners. On one

of these occasions Lamb had spoken playfully of the inconsistency of a member of the Society of Friends writing poetry, and out of a friendly remonstrance in reply there arose a correspondence, long carried on with the greatest satisfaction to both. For fuller information about Mr. Barton, I would refer to the short biography of him prefixed to a selection of his poems published after his death in 1849. The memoir, a model in style and feeling of what such a thing should be, is by the late Edward FitzGerald, who married Mr. Barton's only daughter and child. "Napoleon," with other poems, was the third volume of verse published by Mr. Barton. It had just before appeared. The sonnet here quoted is of course Lamb's own.

Letter CCXVI.

This letter has never been printed. The original is in the possession of my friend, Mr. W. J. Jefferson of Folkestone, whose mother was the *Sophy* of the letter. Mary Lamb had apparently been asked to bring home a stray waistcoat of Crabb Robinson's that he had left behind him in Paris. The allusions to the cow and the canary bird are to certain disturbers of Lamb's sleep that existed at his Dalston lodgings. Little Sophy, a daughter of the Kenneys, was one of twin-sisters; Lamb called her his "little wife." The allusion to the sixpence is surely to the old nursery rhyme:—

> "I love a sixpence, pretty, pretty sixpence,
> I love a sixpence dearer than my life—"

Letter CCXVII.

The following independent account of the visit to Talma was supplied to me by the late Mr. Edward FitzGerald:—"Lamb was staying at Paris with Kenney, when Talma invited them, with Howard Payne, to come and see an original picture of Shakspeare on an old pair of bellows which he had purchased

for a thousand francs, and which proved to be a well-known imposture, of which the great tragedian had recently become the victim. After admiring his supposed acquisition, the party announced their intention of seeing him that evening in the play of *Regulus*, and invited him to sup with them afterwards, to which he assented. Lamb, however, could not at all enter into the spirit of French acting, and in his general distaste made no exception in favour of his intended guest. This, however, did not prevent their mutual and high relish of each other's character and conversation, nor was any allusion made to the performance, till, on rising to go, Talma inquired 'how he liked it?' Lamb shook his head and smiled. 'Ah!' said Talma, 'I was not very happy to-night; you must see me in *Sylla*.'—'Incidit in Scyllam,' said Lamb, 'qui vult vitare Charybdim.'—'Ah! you are a rogue—a great rogue,' said Talma, shaking him cordially by the hand as they parted." The Shakspeare portrait imposture is exposed in an article in *Chambers's Journal* of 27th September 1856, "The Apocryphal in Portraiture."

Lamb's description of Paris in this letter may well be supplemented by a few notes written for his sister's guidance after his own return to England. He advises her to walk along the "Borough-side of the Seine," where she would find a mile and a half of printshops and bookstalls. "Then there is a place where the Paris people put all their dead people, and bring them flowers and dolls and gingerbread-nuts and sonnets and such trifles; and that is all, I think, worth seeing as sights, except that the streets and shops of Paris are themselves the best sight."

Letter CCXVIII.

Your letter and poem. The poem sent was Bernard Barton's "Verses on the Death of Percy Bysshe Shelley," just issued in pamphlet shape. Shelley had perished on the 8th of July in

this year. The line taken in the poem was naturally one of solemn lamentation over the unhappy principles of the late poet.

Letter CCXIX.

Poor Godwin. "The pecuniary troubles already mentioned assumed no serious form till the year 1821, nor did any real crisis arrive till the year 1822. The title to the proprietorship of the house in Skinner Street, of which Godwin held a long lease, was disputed, and an action for ejectment was brought against him. After considerable litigation the suit was finally decided adversely to Godwin's interests. The results were an enforced move from Skinner Street, a claim for arrears of rent, which was wholly unlooked for, the disorganisation of the whole of the business which had been carried on with considerable and increasing success, and finally Godwin became bankrupt."—(Kegan Paul's *William Godwin, his Friends and Contemporaries.*)

Letter CCXXI.

The first of a short series of letters to John Howard Payne, the American actor and playwright. These letters appeared first, with comments by Mr. R. S. Chilton, in the *Century Magazine* for October 1882. To Mr. Chilton and the Editor I am indebted for their kind permission to use them. Mr. Payne lived much in Paris, where presumably Lamb made his acquaintance during his recent visit. Payne had a career of great poverty and struggle, but later in life was made United States Consul at Tunis, where he died in 1852. Among his many dramas was *Clari, the Maid of Milan*, in which occurs the famous "Home, sweet Home," set by Bishop. Lamb's letters to him deal chiefly with some of Payne's dramas then being performed in London. The "little wife" at Versailles in the following letter is the Sophy Kenney of a preceding letter to Mrs. Kenney.

NOTES

Letter CCXXIII.

The proposed Dedication was for the first collected edition of the *Elia Essays*, published early in the following year. It was, in accordance with Lamb's "second thoughts" here explained, not ultimately used. The "sort of Preface" which appeared in the forthcoming number was the "Character of the late Elia," by a Friend.

Letter CCXXIV.

Mr. Walter Wilson, an early friend of Lamb's, was engaged upon a Life of De Foe, and had written to Lamb for guidance. Wilson's *Memoirs of the Life and Times of Daniel De Foe* appeared in 1829. Lamb supplied to the work an "Estimate of De Foe's Secondary Novels," which is, in fact, an expanded version of the criticism contained in this letter. See *Mrs. Leicester's School*, etc.

Letter CCXXVI.

This letter was written to Miss Wordsworth, then on a visit to her brother, the Master of Trinity, at Cambridge.

My new year's speculations. The memorable Essay on "New Year's Eve." Whether the reference to the author of the *Pleasures of Hope* means that Lamb now believed the lines signed "Olen" to have been by the poet Campbell, is uncertain. Possibly it is only a playful allusion to his having himself *not* indulged in these "Pleasures" in the essay in question.

Mrs. Paris, our Cambridge friend. Mrs. Paris, mother of the eminent physician of that name, was the sister of Lamb's friend Ayrton. It was at her house that the Lambs first made the acquaintance of Emma Isola.

Letter CCXXVII.

The first of a series of letters to Mr. John Bates Dibdin, now for the first time printed. Mr. Dibdin was born in 1798, and

died on May 11, 1828. He was the eldest son of Charles Dibdin the Younger, author of *Young Arthur*, and of innumerable plays, poems, songs, etc., and a grandson of Charles Dibdin, the nautical song-writer and composer. John Bates Dibdin held a clerkship in the office of Messrs. Railton, Rankin, and Co., Merchants, in the Old Jewry. He for several years edited the *European Magazine*. He went to Madeira in the hope of re-establishing his health, but shortly after his return to England died of consumption. I am indebted for this information to his nephew, Mr. Robert W. Dibdin, who has most kindly placed the original letters in his possession at my disposal. To him I am further obliged for the following interesting account of Lamb's introduction to his uncle. The account is mainly in the words of a sister of John Bates Dibdin who survived him till quite recently. It fully explains the allusions in the present letter. Miss Dibdin (Mrs. Tonna), after mentioning that she had visited Lamb at Islington, writes:—"My brother, who took me there, had become very intimate with him, after a previously somewhat long acquaintance. He was himself engaged in the city, and had constant occasion to conduct the giving or taking of cheques, as it might be, at the India House. There he always selected the 'little clever man' in preference to the other clerks. At that time the *Elia Essays* were appearing in print. No one had the slightest conception who 'Elia' was. He was talked of everywhere, and everybody was trying to find him out, but without success. At last, from the style and manner of conveying his ideas and opinions on different subjects, my brother began to suspect that Lamb was the individual so widely sought for, and wrote some lines to him, anonymously, sending them by post to his residence, with the hope of sifting him on the subject. Although Lamb could not *know* who sent him the lines, yet he looked very hard at the writer of them the next time they met, when he walked up, as usual, to Lamb's desk in the most unconcerned manner, to

transact the necessary business. Shortly after, when they were again in conversation, something dropped from Lamb's lips which convinced his hearer, beyond a doubt, that his suspicions were correct. He therefore wrote some more lines (anonymously, as before), beginning—

'I've found thee out, O Elia!'

and sent them to Colebrook Row. The consequence was that at their next meeting Lamb produced the lines, and after much laughing, confessed himself to be *Elia*. This led to a warm friendship between them."

The present letter was evidently written by Lamb on the occasion of this mutual disclosure. Mr. Dibdin had signed his poetic appeals to Elia with only the letter "D." Lamb's assumption that his new friend's Christian name was Timothy is, of course, purely gratuitous.

Letter CCXXVIII.

Mr. Bruton was a farmer in Hertfordshire, and a distant connection by marriage of Lamb. See letter of Lamb to Manning, May 1819, "How are my cousins, the Gladmans of Wheathamstead, and farmer Bruton? Mrs. Bruton is a glorious woman." These presents of pig were among the first-fruits of Lamb's famous essay in the *London* of September 1822.

Letter CCXXIX.

"While Mr. Barton's poetical labours affected his health, the first success of them for a time disconcerted him with his clerkship; though neither injured health, nor hope deferred, ever overshadowed his social good-humour, or discovered themselves in repining: nay, he even thought of quitting the bank and Woodbridge altogether, and trusting to his pen for subsistence; an unwise scheme in all men, most unwise in one who had so little authorly tact as himself. From this, however, he

was fortunately diverted by all the friends to whom he communicated his design" (*Memoir*, by Edward FitzGerald).

Letter CCXXXI.

Sewell. W. Sewell's *History of the Quakers*, 1725.

Abbeypony History. Sara Coleridge published in 1822 a translation of Martin Dobrizhoffer's Latin *Account of the Abipones*, a performance, in her father's judgment, "unsurpassed for pure mother English by anything I have read for a long time."

Mr. Mitford's place. The Rev. John Mitford, Rector of Benhall, Suffolk, poet and editor of poets, a neighbour and intimate friend of Bernard Barton.

Letter CCXXXIII.

An edition of "Roxana." In the Prologue that Lamb wrote to Godwin's play of *Faulkener* in 1807, he alluded to the circumstance of Godwin being indebted to De Foe's *Roxana.* See *Mrs. Leicester's School*, etc., and Kegan Paul's *Life of Godwin*, ii. 162.

Who wrote "Quarl." The authorship of *Philip Quarl* is still, I believe, undetermined.

Letter CCXXXIV.

"*A Letter to an Old Gentleman whose education had been neglected.*" This *jeu d'esprit* of Lamb's was ultimately published in the *London Magazine* of January 1825. See *Mrs. Leicester's School*, etc.

I took up Scott. Critical Essays on the English Poets, by John Scott, the Quaker poet of Amwell.

I dined in Parnassus. An account of this dinner is given by Thomas Moore in his *Journals.* Moore gives April 4 as the date of the dinner, so Lamb's date is one of his not uncommon slips. Moore writes:—"Dined at Monkhouse's, a gentleman I had never seen before, on Wordsworth's invitation, who lives

there when he comes to town. A singular party—Coleridge, Wordsworth and wife, Rogers, Charles Lamb (the hero at present of the *London Magazine*), and his sister (the poor woman who went mad with him in the Diligence on the way to Paris), and a Mr. Robinson, one of the *minora sidera* of the constellation of the Lakes. . . . Charles Lamb, a clever fellow certainly, but full of villainous and abortive puns, which he miscarries of every minute" (Moore's *Journals*, iv. 51).

Letter CCXXXV.

My little book. The first series of *Elia* (1823).

The Quaker incident. See Essay on "Imperfect Sympathies" (*Elia*).

The discovery of roasting pigs. See also notes on this Essay in my edition of *Elia*.

His friend Naylor. James Naylor, one of the most fanatical of the disciples of George Fox; shamefully persecuted by order of the Parliament in 1656.

How did you like Hartley's sonnets? Hartley Coleridge had published in the *London Magazine* for February his earliest sonnets, those addressed to his friend Robert Jameson. The first of these, here referred to, is the one beginning—

"When we were idlers with the loitering rills."

See Hartley Coleridge's *Poems*, i. 5.

I borrowed a seal of a friend. The friend was Barron Field. The letter to the "great man" was to Walter Scott, on occasion of the appeal in behalf of Godwin.

Letter CCXXXVIII.

Your precious present. A miniature of Pope, which Procter had sent him.

I have dined with T. Moore. See preceding letter, No. CCXXXIV, p. 97.

Letter CCXXXIX.

Written to Miss Hutchinson (Mrs. Wordsworth's sister), who was taking charge of an invalid relative, Mrs. Monkhouse, at Ramsgate. Lamb's grave accusations against his sister's penmanship are merely playful. Note the delightful strokes of humour in this and the following letter—"'Time' (as was said of one of us) 'toils after us in vain.'" Johnson's line on Shakspeare—"Panting Time toiled after him in vain."

Mr. Gruvellegan would appear to be Lamb's facetious attempt to reproduce the name of Edward Quillinan, afterwards Wordsworth's son-in-law. Lee Priory was the seat of Sir S. E. Brydges, the father of Quillinan's first wife.

Letter CCXL.

My letter to the old gentleman. The parody on De Quincey's *Letters to a Young Man whose Education has been Neglected.* See previous letter to Barton of 5th March.

I miss Janus. "Janus Weathercock," the now notorious Thomas Griffiths Wainewright (the forger and poisoner), had been on the regular staff of the *London Magazine.*

Letter CCXLIII.

This fragment of a letter to Charles Lloyd was first printed in the volume of Barton's Letters and Poems already referred to. Lamb's letter was written to Lloyd on occasion of receiving from him a fresh volume of his poetry: *Poems*, by Charles Lloyd: London, 1823. Among them are "Lines, written Feb. 6, 1822, on the death of Mary Lloyd, Mother of the Author"; "Stanzas on the Death of Mary Braithwaite, the third Sister of the Author"; and others.

Letter CCXLIV.

I abused Hastings. The Elia Essay "The Old Margate Hoy" was written during Lamb's sojourn at Hastings, and published

in the *London Magazine* of this very month, July 1823. In the course of that essay he had, as he says, "abused Hastings." Readers of *Elia* will remember the passage about "this detestable Cinque Port." But, as will be seen, Lamb came to change his opinion of its merits. The small country church, here described, is the little church of Hollington, a mile or two out of Hastings. It evidently inspired Lamb's fancy in a wonderful degree. He recurs to the subject in more than one letter of this period.

Southey has attacked "Elia." See chap. vii. of my *Memoir of Lamb.* Southey's article appeared in the *Quarterly* for January 1823. The Elia Essay "On Witches and other Night Fears" was the one specially chosen by Southey to point his moral.

Letter CCXLVI.

Your kind sonnet. What sonnet this could have been I do not know. Barton had published a sonnet to Elia in the *London* of the previous February, beginning—

> "Delightful author! unto whom I owe
> Moments and moods of fancy and of feeling."

Barton included it in his volume *Poetic Vigils* in 1824. It embodies some discriminating criticism.

Mr. Cary, the Dante-man. The first mention in these letters of the Rev. H. F. Cary, the translator of Dante, and a frequent contributor to the *London Magazine.* He had a residence at the British Museum as Assistant-Keeper of Printed Books.

Letter CCXLVII.

Hood was at this time on a visit to Hastings for his health. Lamb, who had himself been there lately, writes to instruct his friend as to seeing the lions, among which the little church at Hollington again appears. The reference to Standgate Street is simply a practical joke. There is no such street in Hastings, and though great changes have been made in the nomenclature

of streets and roads in that town, the oldest inhabitant can recall no such name.

"*He sang in meads.*" Quoted incorrectly from Landor's *Gebir*, Book iv.—

> "In smiling meads how sweet the brook's repose
> To the rough ocean, and red restless sands."

Tom Woodgate was a boatman at Hastings, under whose care Hood often enjoyed a sail. See the "Literary Reminiscences" in *Hood's Own*. "Old Lignum Janua" in the opening of this letter would appear to be a Latin alternative for him.

Letter CCXLIX.

Your "Stanzas on Bloomfield." This poem had been sent to Lamb on its appearance in the columns of a local paper, and when it was next printed in Barton's *Poetic Vigils* (1824) it was with certain modifications. That word "Horkey," for instance, which is the Suffolk name for the Harvest Supper, had disappeared (probably in deference to Lamb's objections), and the stanza in which it occurred was recast so as to admit of "Harvest-Home" instead.

How happily you have brought in his subjects.—

> "Circling the *Old Oak Table* round,
> Whose moral worth thy measure owns,
> Heroes and heroines yet are found
> Like *Abner and the Widow Jones.*
> There *Gilbert Meldrum's* sterner tones
> In virtue's cause are bold and free,
> And ev'n the patient sufferer's moans
> In pain and sorrow plead for thee."

I meditate a letter to S. in the "London." The famous letter to Southey appeared in the following month.

Letter CCLII.

Mr. Dibdin had sent Lamb a sucking pig (yet another result

of the memorable essay), and with it a miniature semblance of a pig worked in satin and straw.

Sir!—as I say to Southey. A reference to the solemn and formal opening of his letter to Southey in the current number of the *London Magazine.*

Letter CCLIII.

The kindness of your note. Southey's letter is published by me for the first time in the notes to "Lamb's Letter to Southey in the *London Magazine*," in a previous volume of this edition. The "Confessions of a Drunkard" was a paper of Lamb's contributed some years before to a compilation by Basil Montagu, called "Some Enquiries into the Effects of Fermented Liquors. By a Water Drinker." In the *Quarterly* for April 1822 appeared an article on Dr. Reid's treatise on "Hypochondriasis and other Nervous Affections." These "Confessions of a Drunkard" were there referred to as "a fearful picture of the consequences of intemperance," which the reviewer went on to say "we have reason to know is a true tale."

Letter CCLIV.

Thou wilt see a funny passage. See the Elia Essay "Amicus Redivivus," and my notes thereupon.

Letter CCLVI.

Mr. W. Harrison Ainsworth, the future novelist, is here addressed. He must have lent Lamb the works of William Warner, the Elizabethan poet, author of *Albion's England.* The only English version of Goethe's *Faust* then accessible was Hayward's.

Ainsworth, a youth of eighteen, was as yet residing at Manchester, where his father was a solicitor. He came up to London in the following year.

NOTES

CHAPTER V

1824—1827

Letter CCLVIII.

Thurtell, the notorious murderer of Mr. William Weare, "who lived in Lyon's Inn," was executed at Hertford on this day. It will be remembered that at his trial one of the witnesses enunciated the famous definition of Respectability. See Carlyle's Works, *passim.*

Letter CCLIX.

Your friend Taylor. The Rev. C. B. Taylor, curate of Hadleigh, Suffolk, author of various religious stories, now forgotten.

Your account of my black-balling. It had been proposed to admit *Elia* for circulation in a Book Club in Woodbridge, to which Barton and other Friends belonged, with the result here mentioned.

"*I have been merry once or twice ere now.*"
—Master Silence, in *Henry IV.* Part II.

Coleridge's Book. Aids to Reflection, published in 1825. It consists largely, as will be remembered, of passages from Leighton's writings with Coleridge's comments.

The decision against Hunt. The Liberal: Verse and Prose from the South, edited by Leigh Hunt in Italy, contained in its opening number Byron's "Vision of Judgment." The Constitutional Association filed a criminal information in the King's Bench for libel against John Hunt, the publisher. The case came on January 15, 1824, and the defendant was ultimately fined £100, and required to give security for good behaviour for five years.

NOTES

Letter CCLX.

"*Inesilla, or the Tempter*," a story by one of the brothers Ollier, who had published Lamb's collected works in 1818.

Letter CCLXI.

"*Poetic Vigils.*" A volume of verse by Bernard Barton, then in preparation. The motto finally chosen for the title-page was a stanza of Henry Vaughan, the Silurist—

"Dear night! this world's defeat."

Letter CCLXII.

In 1824, Mr. FitzGerald tells us, Barton "received a handsome addition to his income from another quarter. A few members of his Society, including some of the wealthier of his own family, raised £1200 among them for his benefit. . . . It seems that he felt some delicacy at first in accepting the munificent testimony which his own people offered to his talents." Lamb's letter is in reply to one from Barton, consulting him on this matter. Lamb, it will be seen, overstates the amount contributed.

Letter CCLXIV.

This interesting letter is now for the first time printed correctly, from the original in the possession of Mr. B. M'George of Glasgow, who kindly placed it at my disposal. The letter arose out of the following circumstances. James Montgomery, the poet, had this year edited a volume of original prose and verse, setting forth the wrongs and sufferings of the little chimney-sweepers, for whose relief a Society had been for some time labouring. The volume was entitled, *The Chimney-Sweeper's Friend, and Climbing-Boy's Album.* Lamb had been invited to contribute a poem, but not finding time or inspiration, sent instead Blake's verses, "The Chimney-Sweeper," then all but unknown to the ordinary reader of poetry. They appeared in

Montgomery's volume with this heading, "Communicated by Mr. Charles Lamb from a very rare and curious little work," the very rare work being Blake's *Songs of Innocence*. Bernard Barton, himself a contributor to Montgomery's *Album*, had there discovered these verses of Blake's, and had written to Lamb to ask questions concerning the writer of them. "Is Blake a real name?" was evidently his wonder. It will be seen that even Lamb did not know Blake's Christian name.

Your recent acquisitions of the Picture and the Letter. Barton had received from some relatives at Carlisle a portrait of his father, which had greatly pleased him. Barton describes it in a letter to his friend Taylor, included in Mr. FitzGerald's *Memoir*. The picture of Lamb's father, here referred to, has been engraved in Mr. Procter's *Memoir of Lamb*.

His poems have been sold hitherto only in Manuscript. Lamb obviously means that the *Songs of Innocence* were not printed, but etched in writing-hand on the same plates as the drawings that illustrate them. As usual, Lamb was one of the first to recognise genius where the world in general only saw insanity.

The Society with the affected name. "The Society for Ameliorating the Condition of Infant Chimney-Sweepers" is the name of one Society, mentioned in Montgomery's book, having this philanthropic object.

With the exception of an Epilogue. This was an epilogue to Shakspeare's *Richard II.*, performed by the family of Lamb's friend, Barron Field. By the kindness of the late Miss M. L. Field of Hastings, I possess a copy of this epilogue, which will be found in its place, printed (I believe) for the first time, in *Mrs. Leicester's School*, etc. See note in that volume.

So we have lost another Poet. Byron had died at Missolonghi on the 19th of April.

NOTES

Letter CCLXV.

Your very pretty volume. Poetic Vigils, now at last published (1824).

You have done Woolman injustice. In some lines headed "A Memorial of John Woolman, a Minister of the Gospel among the Quakers," written in anapæstic verse.

The piece on Nayler. "A Memorial of James Nayler, the Reproach and Glory of Quakerism."

Letter CCLXVI.

Young Arthur. A story in verse by Mr. Dibdin's father, Charles Dibdin the Younger. Many of the interspersed lyrics are thoroughly graceful and musical.

Just returned from Botany Bay. Barron Field had this year resigned his post of Judge of the Supreme Court at Sydney, and returned to England.

Letter CCLXVII.

Mr. Cary had sent Lamb his translation of the *Birds* of Aristophanes.

Letter CCLXVIII.

On getting a house over your head. "Now, too, after having long lived in a house that was just big enough to eat and sleep in, while he was obliged to board with the ladies of a Quaker School over the way, he obtained a convenient house of his own, where he got his pictures and books about him" (FitzGerald's *Memoir*).

The album shall be attended to. The album of Lucy Barton, to which the poem given in the succeeding letter was contributed.

The "Prometheus," unbound. Mr. Mitford, Barton's neighbour and friend, had written to a local bookseller for a copy of Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound*, and after some delay had re-

ceived the answer that he was sorry the work was not to be obtained "in sheets."

A sonnet conceived and expressed with a witty delicacy. Shelley's lines hardly constitute a sonnet. Lamb refers to his "Lines to a Reviewer," beginning—

> "Alas! good friend, what profit can you see
> In hating such a hateless thing as me?
> There is no sport in hate where all the rage
> Is on one side."

A futile effort in the next Number. The beautiful Essay, "Blakesmoor in Hertfordshire," was in the *London Magazine* for September 1824.

Letter CCLXIX.

These verses were headed, when sent in this letter, "In the Album of *Hannah* Barton." Lamb explains why he had assumed that Christian name.

Letter CCLXXI.

Mr. Procter (Barry Cornwall) was married to Miss Anne Skepper, the step-daughter of Basil Montagu, in October 1824.

Letter CCLXXII.

Mr. Monkhouse, a cousin of Mrs. Wordsworth's, was threatened with consumption, and had been ordered by his physicians to winter in Devonshire. Miss Hutchinson was staying at Torquay with the Monkhouses. He died early in the following year.

Letter CCLXXIII.

One of Mr. Mitford's vases, which were actually made in China and sent home, is now, through the friendly offices of Mr. John Loder of Woodbridge, in the Editor's possession.

Fauntleroy, the memorable banker and forger, was executed on November 30, 1824.

NOTES

Letter CCLXXIV.

The book, transformed by the servant-maid into "Luster's Tables," was (as will easily be guessed) *Luther's Table-talk.*

Letter CCLXXV.

Leigh Hunt was still with his family in Genoa. See the allusion in the last sentences of the letter. He did not return to England till late in the following year, 1825.

Vincentio is Vincent Novello. Lamb probably wrote *Isabella,* but Mrs. Novello's name was *Mary Sabilla; Mr. Clark* was Charles Cowden Clarke, her son-in-law. The various details respecting the Novello family are pure romance. The reference to the quite recent marriage of Procter (in October 1824) further fixes the date of the letter.

Irving has dedicated a book to S. T. C. Irving's "Anniversary Sermon of the London Missionary Society," preached at Whitfield's Tabernacle in May 1824, and published with a Dedication to Coleridge. The following is an extract from this Dedication: "—— When I state the reason to be that you have been more profitable to my faith in orthodox doctrine, to my spiritual understanding of the Word of God, and to my right conception of the Christian Church, than any or all of the men with whom I have entertained friendship and conversation, it will perhaps still more astonish the mind and stagger the belief of those who have adopted, as once I did myself, the misrepresentations which are purchased for hire and vended for a price concerning your character and works." See Mrs. Oliphant's *Life of Irving*, vol. i. chap. ix.

Letter CCLXXVII.

The Chessiad, a mock-heroic poem, by Charles Dibdin the Younger. The simile of the charwoman is a fair specimen of the whole, but (*pace* Lamb) is hardly up to the level of Hudibras. The volume sent was *Comic Tales and Lyrical Fancies;*

including *The Chessiad*, a mock-heroic, in five cantos, etc. etc. (London, 1825.)

Letter CCLXXVIII.

De Quincey's "Parody." Lamb's "Letter to an Old Gentleman," etc., already more than once referred to as a parody of De Quincey's *Letter to a Young Man whose Education has been Neglected.*

The "Horns." A paper of Lamb's, entitled "A Vision of Horns," rather poor and forced, and on a dubious subject, was printed in the *London Magazine* for this month.

The Memoir of Liston. See *Mrs. Leicester's School*, etc. It appeared, as did also the Parody on De Quincey, in the *London Magazine* for January 1825.

In the next Number I figure as a Theologian! Lamb published a short paper, "Unitarian Protests," directed against the conformity to Church ceremonies by his old friends the Unitarians.

I have lately picked up an epigram. The epigram in question was by Henry Man, one of the clerks in the South-Sea House, when Lamb first knew that Institution. The two noble earls were Lord Spencer and Lord Sandwich. Lamb refers to the two "forgotten volumes" by Man, in his Elia Essay, "Recollections of the South-Sea House." The volumes were published in 1802: *Miscellaneous Works in Verse and Prose of the late Henry Man.* The epigram is there given. Man was Deputy-Secretary at the South-Sea House in 1793.

Letter CCLXXX.

That ugly paper, the "Vision of Horns" before mentioned.

"Dream on J. Bunyan." Refers possibly to some lines by Barton on seeing a portrait of John Bunyan, which were printed some time after in Major's edition of the *Pilgrim's Progress* with Southey's Biography of the author.

The second Number. Of the *London Magazine*, New Series.

The queen of the East Angles. Barton's daughter, Lucy.

Letter CCLXXXI.

I saw Tuthill yesternight. Lamb had been taking medical advice as to his qualifications to retire from the India House, on the score of ill-health.

Letter CCLXXXIII.

See Lamb's Elia Essay, "The Superannuated Man," and the notes thereon, in my edition of *Elia.* The final release from his slavery came about on the last Tuesday in March. Two medical men, Tuthill, and Coleridge's friend, Gillman of Highgate, gave him the necessary certificates.

Letter CCLXXXIV.

"*The little bird that wings the sky.*"

A random shot at Lovelace's—

> "The birds that wanton in the air
> Know no such liberty."

Tell me how you like "Barbara S." See *Essays of Elia.* It appeared in the *London* for this month. The actual heroine of the story was Fanny Kelly.

Letter CCLXXXVI.

Coleridge has just finished his Prize Essay. Refers to a paper by Coleridge, on the *Prometheus* of Æschylus, read before the Royal Society of Literature on the 18th of May 1825.

My "hiatus crumenæ." What Falstaff calls this "consumption of the purse." Lamb had retired upon two-thirds of his salary; hence the reference to his missing "thirds."

Letter CCLXXXVII.

My poor pittance in the "London." The allusion is to the Elia

Essay, "The Convalescent," in the *London Magazine* for this month.

Your book. Barton had sent Lamb his volume, *Poems*, by Bernard Barton, 1820. It contains "Meditations in Great Bealings Churchyard," and the other pieces referred to by Lamb. It is dedicated in some prefatory lines to Maria Hack, and the volume itself opens with "Verses supposed to be written in a Burial-ground belonging to the Society of Friends," in which the "baldness" of the ground, as regards "sculptured monuments," is apologised for.

Anne Knight. Mrs. Knight, a member of the Society of Friends, who kept a school at Woodbridge, was a dear and intimate friend of Bernard Barton and his daughter.

Letter CCLXXXVIII.

This letter is in reply to one from Coleridge, first printed in the "Literary Reminiscences" in *Hood's Own.* Coleridge had met with the *Odes and Addresses to Great People*, by Hood and his brother-in-law, J. H. Reynolds, but published anonymously, and had conjectured from internal evidence that the volume was by Lamb. He wrote accordingly to tax Lamb with it. "Yes, Master Charles," he writes, "you are discovered"; and he adds, "the puns are nine out of ten good, the 'Newgatory,' transcendent."

Letter CCXC.

Southey had sent Lamb his *Book of the Church* (1824), and his poem, the *Tale of Paraguay*, just published (1825). The poem was founded upon incidents in Dobrizhoffer's *History of the Abipones*, translated from the Latin by Sara Coleridge three years before. Hence the "compliment to the translatress" referred to by Lamb. In the third canto of the poem, Southey, in describing Dobrizhoffer, proceeds thus:—

"But of his native speech because well-nigh
Disuse in him forgetfulness had wrought,
In Latin he composed his history;
A garrulous, but a lively tale, and fraught
With matter of delight and food for thought.
And if he could in Merlin's glass have seen
By whom his tomes to speak our tongue were taught,
The old man would have felt as pleased, I ween,
As when he won the ear of that great Empress Queen."

Southey's poem was prefaced with a poetical dedication to his little daughter, Edith May Southey, beginning—

"Edith! ten years are numbered since the day
Which ushers in the cheerful month of May,
To us by thy dear birth, my daughter dear,
Was blest."

The poem itself opens with an apostrophe to the discoverer of vaccination—

"Jenner! forever shall thy honoured name."

I have a one-act farce going to be acted at the Haymarket. Probably the *Pawnbroker's Daughter*, which happily was not destined to be performed.

G. Dyer is in the height of an uxorious paradise. According to Crabb Robinson, he married a laundress in Clifford's Inn.

Letter CCXCI.

You have come off triumphant with Bartholomew Fair. In the Number of the *Every-Day Book* for September 5, 1825, there is a long account of a personal visit to Bartholomew Fair, by Hone himself.

Letter CCXCII.

This playful note was printed by me for the first time. The allusion to "flame-coloured" hose would seem to arise out of an indistinct association with Sir Andrew Aguecheek.

Letter CCXCIII.

Lamb was at this time contributing to the new *Monthly Magazine* his "Popular Fallacies." They appeared between January and September in this year, and are the "Proverbs" referred to. See also the following letter.

Letter CCXCV.

I got your book. Barton's last volume of poems, *Devotional Verses: founded on, and illustrative of, Select Texts of Scripture.* (London, 1826.)

Uuiform as they are, and untristorify'd. This last word is certainly as Lamb wrote it, but what he meant by it, and from what he formed it, I must leave to the critics to determine.

The "Spiritual Law" is a short poem on the text "But the word is very nigh thee, in thy mouth and in thy heart, that thou may'st do it."

Whipping the Greek drama upon the back of Genesis. In some verses on Abraham's willingness to sacrifice Isaac, Barton had written—

> "Brief colloquy, yet more sublime
> To every feeling heart
> Than all the boast of classic time
> Or Drama's proudest art;
> Far, far beyond the Grecian stage,
> Or Poesy's most glowing page."

Letter CCXCVI.

"*The Religion of the Actors.*" A little paper by Lamb, printed in the new *Monthly Magazine* for May of this year.

Letter CCXCVII.

Your uephew's pleasant book. Henry Nelson Coleridge published this year with John Murray, *Six Months in the West Indies in 1825*, the narrative of a journey taken by the young man in company with his uncle for the benefit of his health. It con-

tains pleasant and graphic descriptions of the various places visited, and is written throughout in a witty vein, and in a tone of rather ostentatious Epicureanism, which no doubt led to Coleridge's strictures on its morality. The style is curiously unlike Lamb's, but exhibits many signs of the influence of the *Sentimental Journey*, as Lamb truly remarks. But the little volume "saddens into excellent sense" towards the end, in a serious discussion of the then burning question of West Indian Slavery.

F. K. Fanny Kelly.

Letter CCCI.

The likeness which accompanies this letter was obviously the well-known etching on copper by Mr. Brook Pulham. This portrait was taken in 1825, and is now in the possession of the India Office.

Letter CCCII.

Mr. Dibdin was staying at Hastings, as his delicate health often obliged him to do, and was lodging at a baker's, to which fact allusions will be discovered in this and the following letters. The theme of the little church at Hollington is again the subject of infinite variations. "Blucher Row" is a thing of the past, and has merged into a thoroughfare bearing a quite other name.

Peter Fin. The name of a personage in a poem of Thomas Hood's.

Letter CCCIII.

Lamb and his friend Dibdin were given to exchanging letters in rhyme. The "Dibdin Muse" seems to have favoured, in various degree, all members of the family, and we find Lamb retorting that he too came of a poetical stock, and adducing his father, old John Lamb, the *Lovel* of the Essay on "The Old Benchers

of the Inner Temple." See that Essay, and my notes upon it. Poor Dibdin had apparently allowed "plan, sir" to rhyme to "stanza" in the effusion which called forth this reply. "Small Bohemia," or "Little Bohemia," remains to this day, I believe, the name of a district outside Hastings.

Letter CCCIV.

The Quotidian. Hone's *Every-Day Book.* Lamb had published some "Quatrains" to Hone in the *London Magazine*, which were reprinted in the *Every-Day Book* of July 9, 1826. Hone appended to them a poetical reply in the same number, headed "Quatorzians." For Lamb's verses, see *Poems, Plays, and Essays.* They begin—

I like you and your book, ingenious Hone!

Letter CCCV.

Another of those wild and grotesque effusions, written to amuse the invalid during his enforced loneliness at a watering-place. Mr. Dibdin's nephew informs me that his uncle was remarkable for his genuine piety and religious habits, which makes the banter even more extravagant. "Old Ranking" was, of course, one of the firm in the Old Jewry, young Dibdin's employers.

Letter CCCVI.

The Garrick plays. Lamb was laboriously going through this collection, bequeathed by Garrick to the nation, for the purpose of publishing selections from them in his friend Hone's *Table Book.*

I may just refer to Lamb's expression, "*dross* matters,"—matters, that is, touching *money.* In previous editions of Lamb's Letters, readings have varied curiously from "these matters" to "dress matters."

NOTES

Letter CCCVII.

Sacred Specimens. Mr. Mitford published this year his *Sacred Specimens: Selected from Early English Poets.*

Hood's book is mighty clever. Whims and Oddities. Second Series.

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CHAPTER V

1824—1827

LETTERS TO BERNARD BARTON AND OTHERS

(CONTINUED)

LETTER CCCVIII

TO MR. H. C. ROBINSON

Colebrooke Row, Islington,
Saturday, January 20, 1827.

DEAR ROBINSON—I called upon you this morning, and found that you were gone to visit a dying friend. I had been upon a like errand. Poor Norris has been lying dying for now almost a week, such is the penalty we pay for having enjoyed a strong constitution. Whether he knew me or not, I know not; or whether he saw me through his poor glazed eyes; but the group I saw about him I shall not forget. Upon the bed, or about it, were assembled his wife and two daughters, and poor deaf Richard, his son, looking doubly stupified. There they were, and seemed to have been sitting all the week. I could only reach out a hand to Mrs. Norris. Speaking was impossible in that mute chamber. By this time I hope it is all over with him. In him I have a loss the world cannot make up. He was my friend and my father's friend all the life I can remember. I seem to have made foolish friendships ever since. Those are friendships which outlive a second generation. Old as I am waxing, in his eyes I was still the child he first knew me. To the last he called me Charley. I have none to call me Charley now. He was the last link that bound me to the Temple. You are but of yesterday. In him seem to have died the

old plainness of manners and singleness of heart. Letters he knew nothing of, nor did his reading extend beyond the pages of the *Gentleman's Magazine*. Yet there was a pride of literature about him from being amongst books (he was librarian), and from some scraps of doubtful Latin which he had picked up in his office of entering students, that gave him very diverting airs of pedantry. Can I forget the erudite look with which, when he had been in vain trying to make out a black-letter text of Chaucer in the Temple Library, he laid it down and told me that—"in those old books, Charley, there is sometimes a deal of very indifferent spelling"; and seemed to console himself in the reflection! His jokes, for he had his jokes, are now ended; but they were old trusty perennials, staples that pleased after *decies repetita*, and were always as good as new. One song he had, which was reserved for the night of Christmas Day, which we always spent in the Temple. It was an old thing, and spoke of the flat bottoms of our foes, and the possibility of their coming over in darkness, and alluded to threats of an invasion many years blown over; and when he came to the part—

> "We 'll still make 'em run, and we 'll still make 'em sweat,
> In spite of the Devil and *Brussels Gazette*,"

his eyes would sparkle as with the freshness of an impending event. And what is the *Brussels Gazette* now? I cry while I enumerate these trifles. "How shall we tell them in a stranger's ear?" His poor good

girls will now have to receive their afflicted mother in an unsuccessful hovel in an obscure village in Herts, where they have been long struggling to make a school without effect; and poor deaf Richard, and the more helpless for being so, is thrown on the wide world.

My first motive in writing, and indeed in calling on you, was to ask if you were enough acquainted with any of the Benchers to lay a plain statement before them of the circumstances of the family. I almost fear not, for you are of another hall. But if you can oblige me and my poor friend, who is now insensible to any favours, pray exert yourself. You cannot say too much good of poor Norris and his poor wife. Yours ever,

CHARLES LAMB.

LETTER CCCIX

TO THOMAS ALLSOP

January 25, 1827.

MY DEAR ALLSOP—I cannot forbear thanking you for your kind interference with Taylor, whom I do not expect to see in haste at Islington.

It is hardly weather to ask a dog up here, but I need hardly say how happy we shall be to see you. I cannot be out of evenings till John Frost be routed. We came home from Newman St. the other night late, and I was crampt all night.

Love to Mrs. Allsop.

Yours truly, C. L.

LETTER CCCX

TO WILLIAM HONE

January 27, 1827.

DEAR SIR—It is not unknown to you, that about sixteen years since I published "Specimens of English Dramatic Poets who lived about the time of Shakspeare." For the scarcer plays, I had recourse to the collection bequeathed to the British Museum by Mr. Garrick. But my time was but short; and my subsequent leisure has discovered in it a treasure rich and exhaustless beyond what I then imagined. In it is to be found almost every production, in the shape of a play, that has appeared in print since the time of the old mysteries and moralities to the days of Crown and D'Urfey. Imagine the luxury to one like me,—who, above every other form of poetry, have ever preferred the dramatic,—of sitting in the princely apartments, for such they are, of poor, condemned Montagu House,—which, I predict, will not soon be followed by a handsomer,—and culling at will the flowers of some thousand dramas! It is like having the range of a nobleman's library, with the librarian to your friend. Nothing can exceed the courteousness and attentions of the gentleman who has the chief direction of the reading-rooms here; and you have scarce to ask for a volume before it is laid before you. If the occasional extracts which I have been tempted to bring away may find an appropriate place in your "Table Book,"

some of them are weekly at your service. By those who remember the "Specimens," these must be considered as mere after-gleanings, supplementary to that work, only comprising a longer period. You must be content with sometimes a scene, sometimes a song, a speech, a passage, or a poetical image, as they happen to strike me. I read without order of time; I am a poor hand at dates; and, for any biography of the dramatists, I must refer to writers who are more skilful in such matters. My business is with their poetry only.

Your well-wisher, C. LAMB.

LETTER CCCXI

[*February 5, 1827.*]

FOR God's sake be more sparing of your poetry: your this week's Number has an excess of it.

In haste, C. L.

Mr. Hone,
22, Belvidere Place,
near Suffolk Street,
Borough.

LETTER CCCXII

[*March 20, 1827.*]

DAMNABLE *erratum* (can't you notice it?) in the last line but two of the last *Extract* in *No. 9, Garrick Plays*—

"Blushing forth golden hair and glorious red":

A sun-bright line spoiled by *Blush* for *Blushing*.

N. B.—The general Number was excellent. Also a few lines higher—

"Restrained Liberty attain'd is sweet"

should have a full stop. 'T is the end of the old man's speech. These little blemishes kill such delicate things: prose feeds on grosser punctualities. You have now 3 Numbers in hand; one I sent you yesterday. Of course I send no more till Sunday week.

P. S.—Omitted above—"DEAR HONE."

C. L.

Mr. Hone,
No. 22, Belvidere Place,
Southwark.

LETTER CCCXIII

TO B. R. HAYDON

March 1827.

DEAR RAFFAELE HAYDON—Did the maid tell you I came to see your picture, not on Sunday but the day before? I think the face and bearing of the Bucephalus tamer very noble, his flesh too effeminate or painty. The skin of the female's back kneeling is much more carnous. I had small time to pick out praise or blame, for two lord-like Bucks

came in, upon whose strictures my presence seemed to impose restraint; I plebeian'd off therefore.

I think I have hit on a subject for you, but can't swear it was never executed—I never heard of its being—"Chaucer beating a Franciscan Friar in Fleet Street." Think of the old dresses, houses, etc. "It seemeth that both these learned men (Gower and Chaucer) were of the Inner Temple; for not many years since Master Buckley did see a record in the same house where Geoffry Chaucer was fined two shillings for beating a Franciscan Friar in Fleet Street."

Yours in haste (salt fish waiting),

C. Lamb.

LETTER CCCXIV

TO VINCENT NOVELLO

April 1827.

Dear Sir—I conjure you, in the name of all the Sylvan Deities, and of the Muses, whom you honour, and they reciprocally love and honour you, rescue this old and passionate *Ditty*—the very flower of an old, forgotten *Pastoral*, which, had it been in all parts equal, the *Faithful Shepherdess* of Fletcher had been but a second name in this sort of Writing—rescue it from the profane hands of every Common Composer; and in one of your tranquillest moods, when you have most leisure from those sad thoughts which sometimes unworthily beset you—yet a mood in itself not unallied to the

better sort of melancholy—laying by, for once, the lofty Organ, with which you shake the Temples, attune, as to the Pipe of Paris himself, to some milder and love-according instrument, this pretty Courtship between Paris and his (then-not-as-yet-forsaken) Œnone. Oblige me, and all more knowing Judges of Music and of Poesy, by the adaptation of fit musical numbers, which it only wants, to be the rarest Love Dialogue in our Language.

Your Implorer C. L.

LETTER CCCXV

TO WILLIAM HONE

[*May 1827.*]

SIR—A correspondent in your last number rather hastily asserts that there is no other authority than Davenport's Tragedy for the poisoning of Matilda by King John. It oddly enough happens, that in the same number appears an extract from a play of Heywood's, of an older date, in two parts, in which play the fact of such poisoning, as well as her identity with Maid Marian, are equally established. Michael Drayton, also, hath a legend confirmatory (so far as poetical authority can go) of the violent manner of her death. But neither he nor Davenport confounds her with Robin's mistress. Besides the named authorities, old Fuller, I think, somewhere relates, as matter of chronicle-history, that old Fitzwater (he is called Fitzwater both in Heywood and

in Davenport), being banished after his daughter's murder,—some years subsequently, King John, at a tournament in France, being delighted with the valiant bearing of a combatant in the lists, and enquiring his name, was told it was his old servant, the banished Fitzwater, who desired nothing more heartily than to be reconciled to his liege; and an affecting reconciliation followed. In the common collection, called "Robin Hood's Garland" (I have not seen Ritson's), no mention is made, if I remember, of the nobility of Marian. Is she not the daughter of old Squire Gamwell, of Gamwell Hall? Sorry that I cannot gratify the curiosity of your "disembodied spirit" (who, as such is, methinks, sufficiently "veiled" from our notice) with more authentic testimonies, I rest,

Your humble Abstractor, **C. L.**

LETTER CCCXVI

TO BERNARD BARTON

Enfield, and for some weeks to come,
June 11, 1827.

DEAR B. B.—One word more of the picture verses, and that for good and all; pray with a neat pen alter one line

"His learning seems to lay small stress on"

to

"His learning lays no mighty stress on"

to avoid the unseemly recurrence (ungrammatical also) of "seems" in the next line, besides the nonsense of "but" there, as it now stands. And I request you, as a personal favour to me, to erase the last line of all, which I should never have written from myself. The fact is, it was a silly joke of Hood's, who gave me the frame (you judged rightly it was not its own) with the remark that you would like it because it was b—d b—d; and I lugged it in: but I shall be quite hurt if it stands, because tho' you and yours have too good sense to object to it, I would not have a sentence of mine seen that to any foolish ear might seem unrespectful to thee. Let it end at "appalling": the joke is coarse and useless, and hurts the tone of the rest. Take your best "ivory-handled" and scrape it forth.

Your specimen of what you might have written is hardly fair. Had it been a present to me, I should have taken a more sentimental tone: but of a trifle from me it was my cue to speak in an underish tone of commendation. Prudent *givers* (what word for such a nothing) disparage their gifts; 't is an art we have. So you see you would n't have been so wrong taking a higher tone. But enough of nothing. By the by, I suspected M. of being the disparager of the frame: hence a *certain line.*

For the frame, 't is as the room is where it hangs. It hung up fronting my old cobwebby folios and battered furniture (the fruit piece has resumed its place), and was much better than a spick and span

one. But if your room be very neat and your *other pictures* bright with gilt, it should be so too. I can't judge, not having seen, but my dingy study it suited.

Martin's "Belshazzar" (the picture) I have seen. Its architectural effect is stupendous; but the human figures, the squalling contorted little antics that are playing at being frightened, like children at a sham ghost, who half know it to be a mask, are detestable. Then the *letters* are nothing more than a transparency lighted up, such as a Lord might order to be lit up on a sudden at a Christmas gambol, to scare the ladies. The *type* is as plain as Baskerville's: they should have been dim, full of mystery, letters to the mind rather than the eye.

Rembrandt has painted only Belshazzar and a courtier or two (taking a part of the banquet for the whole), not fribbled out a mob of fine folks. Then everything is so distinct, to the very necklaces, and that foolish little prophet. What *one* point is there of interest? The ideal of such a subject is, that you the spectator should see nothing but what at the time you would have seen,—the *hand*, and the *King*,—not to be at leisure to make tailor-remarks on the dresses, or, Dr. Kitchener-like, to examine the good things at table.

Just such a confused piece is his "Joshua," frittered into a thousand fragments, little armies here, little armies there—you should see only the *Sun* and *Joshua*. If I remember, he has not left out that luminary entirely; but for Joshua, I was ten min-

utes a finding him out. Still he is showy in all that is not the human figure or the preternatural interest: but the first are below a drawing-school girl's attainment, and the last is a phantasmagoric trick, —"Now you shall see what you shall see, dare is Balshazar and dare is Daniel."

You have my thoughts of M., and so adieu!

C. LAMB.

LETTER CCCXVII

TO WILLIAM HONE

[*June 1827.*]

DEAR SIR—Somebody has fairly play'd a *hoax* on you (I suspect that pleasant rogue *Moxon*) in sending you the sonnet in my name inserted in your last number. True it is that I must own to the verses being mine, but not written on the occasion there pretended; for I have not yet had the pleasure of seeing the lady in the part of Emmeline; and I have understood that the force of her acting in it is rather in the expression of new-born sight, than of the previous want of it. The lines were really written upon her performance in the "Blind Boy," and appeared in the "Morning Chronicle" some years back. I suppose our facetious friend thought they would serve again, like an old coat new-turned.

Yours (and his, nevertheless),

C. LAMB.

TO PATMORE

LETTER CCCXVIII

TO MR. PATMORE

Londres, Julie 19, 1827.

DEAR P.—I am so poorly. I have been to a funeral, where I made a pun, to the consternation of the rest of the mourners. And we had wine. I can't describe to you the howl which the widow set up at proper intervals. Dash could, for it was not unlike what he makes.

The letter I sent you was one directed to the care of E. W——, India House, for Mrs. H[azlitt]. *Which* Mrs. H—— I don't yet know; but A—— has taken it to France on speculation. Really it is embarrassing. There is Mrs. present H., Mrs. late H., and Mrs. John H., and to which of the three Mrs. Wigginses it appertains, I know not. I wanted to open it, but 't is transportation.

I am sorry you are plagued about your book. I would strongly recommend you to take for one story Massinger's "Old Law." It is exquisite. I can think of no other.

Dash is frightful this morning. He whines and stands up on his hind legs. He misses Becky, who is gone to town. I took him to Barnet the other day, and he could n't eat his vittles after it. Pray God his intellectuals be not slipping.

Mary is gone out for some soles. I suppose 't is no use to ask you to come and partake of 'em; else there is a steam vessel.

I am doing a tragi-comedy in two acts, and have got on tolerably; but it will be refused, or worse. I never had luck with anything my name was put to.

O, I am so poorly! I *waked* it at my cousin's the bookbinder, who is now with God; or, if he is not, 't is no fault of mine.

We hope the Frank wines do not disagree with Mrs. P——. By the way, I like her.

Did you ever taste frogs? Get them if you can. They are like little Lilliput rabbits, only a thought nicer.

How sick I am!—not of the world, but of the widow's shrub. She's sworn under £6000, but I think she perjured herself. She howls in E *la*, and I comfort her in B flat. You understand music?

If you hav'n't got Massinger, you have nothing to do but go to the first Bibliothèque you can light upon at Boulogne, and ask for it (Gifford's edition); and if they hav'n't got it you can have "Athalie" par Monsieur Racine, and make the best of it. But that "Old Law" is delicious.

"No shrimps!" (that 's in answer to Mary's question about how the soles are to be done).

I am uncertain where this wandering letter may reach you. What you mean by Poste Restante, God knows. Do you mean I must pay the postage? So I do, to Dover.

We had a merry passage with the widow at the Commons. She was howling—part howling and part giving directions to the proctor—when crash! down

went my sister through a crazy chair, and made the clerks grin, and I grinned, and the widow tittered, and then I knew that she was not inconsolable. Mary was more frightened than hurt.

She 'd make a good match for anybody (by she, I mean the widow).

> "If he bring but a *relict* away,
> He is happy, nor heard to complain."
>
> SHENSTONE.

Procter has got a wen growing out at the nape of his neck, which his wife wants him to have cut off; but I think it is rather an agreeable excrescence: like his poetry, redundant. Hone has hanged himself for debt. Godwin was taken up for picking pockets. Moxon has fallen in love with Emma, our nut-brown maid. Becky takes to bad courses. Her father was blown up in a steam machine. The coroner found it "insanity." I should not like him to sit on my letter.

Do you observe my direction. Is it Gallic—classical? Do try and get some frogs. You must ask for "grenouilles" (green eels). They don't understand "frogs," though 't is a common phrase with us.

If you go through Bulloign (Boulogne), inquire if old Godfrey is living, and how he got home from the crusades. He must be a very old man.

If there is anything new in politics or literature in France, keep it till I see you again, for I 'm in no hurry. Chatty Briant is well I hope.

I think I have no more news; only give both our loves (all three, says Dash), to Mrs. P——, and bid

her get quite well, as I am at present, bating qualms, and the grief incident to losing a valuable relation.

C. L.

LETTER CCCXIX

TO MRS. SHELLEY

Enfield, July 26, 1827.

DEAR Mrs. Shelley—At the risk of throwing away some fine thoughts, I must write to say how pleased we were with your very kind remembering of us (who have unkindly run away from all our friends) before you go. Perhaps you are gone, and then my tropes are wasted. If any piece of better fortune has lighted upon you than you expected, but less than we wish you, we are rejoiced. We are here trying to like solitude, but have scarce enough to justify the experiment. We get some, however. The six days are our Sabbath; the seventh—why, Cockneys will come for a little fresh air, and so—

But by *your month*, or October at furthest, we hope to see Islington; I, like a giant refreshed with the leaving off of wine; and Mary, pining for Mr. Moxon's books and Mr. Moxon's society. Then we shall meet.

I am busy with a farce in two acts; the incidents tragi-comic. I can do the dialogue *commey for:* but the damned plot—I believe I must omit it altogether. The scenes come after one another like geese, not marshalling like cranes or a Hyde Park review.

The story is as simple as G[eorge] D[yer], and the language plain as his spouse. The characters are three women to one man; which is one more than laid hold on him in the "Evangely." I think that prophecy squinted towards my drama.

I want some Howard Paine to sketch a skeleton of artfully succeeding scenes through a whole play, as the courses are arranged in a cookery book: I to find wit, passion, sentiment, character, and the like trifles: to lay in the dead colours,—I 'd Titianesque 'em up: to mark the channel in a cheek (smooth or furrowed, yours or mine), and where tears should course I 'd draw the waters down: to say where a joke should come in or a pun be left out: to bring my *personæ* on and off like a Beau Nash; and I 'd Frankenstein them there: to bring three together on the stage at once; they are so shy with me, that I can get no more than two; and there they stand till it is the time, without being the season, to withdraw them.

I am teaching Emma Latin to qualify her for a superior governess-ship; which we see no prospect of her getting. 'T is like feeding a child with chopped hay from a spoon. Sisyphus his labours were as nothing to it.

Actives and passives jostle in her nonsense, till a deponent enters, like Chaos, more to embroil the fray. Her prepositions are suppositions; her conjunctions copulative have no connection in them; her concords disagree; her interjections are purely Eng-

lish "Ah!" and "Oh!" with a yawn and a gape in the same tongue; and she herself is a lazy, block-headly supine. As I say to her, ass *in præsenti* rarely makes a wise man *in futuro*.

But I daresay it was so with you when you began Latin, and a good while after.

Good-by! Mary's love.

Yours truly, C. Lamb.

LETTER CCCXX

TO SIR JOHN STODDART

[*August 9, 1827.*]

Dear Knight—Old Acquaintance—'T is with a violence to the *pure imagination* (*vide* the "Excursion" *passim*) that I can bring myself to believe I am writing to Dr. Stoddart once again, at Malta. But the deductions of severe reason warrant the proceeding. I write from Enfield, where we are seriously weighing the advantages of dulness over the over-excitement of too much company, but have not yet come to a conclusion. What is the news? for we see no paper here; perhaps you can send us an old one from Malta. Only, I heard a butcher in the market-place whisper something about a change of ministry. I don't know who 's in or out, or care, only as it might affect *you*. For domestic doings, I have only to tell, with extreme regret, that poor Elisa Fenwick (that was)—Mrs. Rutherford—is dead;

and that we have received a most heart-broken letter from her mother—left with four grandchildren, orphans of a living scoundrel lurking about the pot-houses of Little Russell Street, London: they and she—God help 'em!—at New York. I have just received Godwin's third volume of the *Republic*, which only reaches to the commencement of the Protectorate. I think he means to spin it out to his life's thread. Have you seen Fearn's *Anti-Tooke?* I am no judge of such things—you are; but I think it very clever indeed. If I knew your bookseller, I 'd order it for you at a venture: 't is two octavos, Longman and Co. Or do you read now? Tell it not in the Admiralty Court, but my head aches *hesterno vino.* I can scarce pump up words, much less ideas, congruous to be sent so far. But your son must have this by to-night's post. . . . Manning is gone to Rome, Naples, etc., probably to touch at Sicily, Malta, Guernsey, etc.; but I don't know the map. Hazlitt is resident at Paris, whence he pours his lampoons in safety at his friends in England. He has his boy with him. I am teaching Emma Latin. By the time you can answer this, she will be qualified to instruct young ladies: she is a capital English reader: and S. T. C. acknowledges that a part of a passage in Milton she read better than he, and part he read best, her part being the shorter. But, seriously, if Lady St—— (oblivious pen, that was about to write *Mrs.!*) could hear of such a young person wanted (she smatters of French, some Italian, music

of course), we 'd send our loves by her. My congratulations and assurances of old esteem.

C. L.

LETTER CCCXXI

TO BERNARD BARTON

August 10, 1827.

DEAR B. B.—I have not been able to answer you, for we have had and are having (I just snatch a moment) our poor quiet retreat, to which we fled from society, full of company—some staying with us; and this moment, as I write, almost, a heavy importation of two old ladies has come in. Whither can I take wing from the oppression of human faces? Would I were in a wilderness of apes, tossing cocoa-nuts about, grinning and grinned at!

Mitford was hoaxing you, surely, about my engraving; 't is a little sixpenny thing, too like by half, in which the draughtsman has done his best to avoid flattery. There have been two editions of it, which I think are all gone, as they have vanished from the window where they hung—a print-shop, corner of Great and Little Queen Streets, Lincoln's Inn Fields, where any London friend of yours may inquire for it; for I am (though you *won't understand it*) at Enfield Chase (Mrs. Leishman's). We have been here near three months, and shall stay two more, if people will let us alone; but they persecute us from village to village. So, don't direct to *Isling-*

ton again, till further notice. I am trying my hand at a drama, in two acts, founded on Crabbe's "Confidant," *mutatis mutandis*. You like the Odyssey. Did you ever read my "Adventures of Ulysses," founded on Chapman's old translation of it? For children or men. Chapman is divine, and my abridgment has not quite emptied him of his divinity. When you come to town I 'll show it to you. You have well described your old-fashioned grand paternal hall. Is it not odd that every one's earliest recollections are of some such place! I had my Blakesware (Blakesmoor in the *London*). Nothing fills a child's mind like a large old mansion; better if un—or partially —occupied; peopled with the spirits of deceased members of the county and Justices of the Quorum. Would I were buried in the peopled solitude of one, with my feelings at seven years old! Those marble busts of the Emperors, they seemed as if they were to stand for ever, as they had stood from the living days of Rome, in that old marble hall, and I to partake of their permanency. Eternity was, while I thought not of Time. But he thought of me, and they are toppled down, and corn covers the spot of the noble old dwelling and its princely gardens. I feel like a grasshopper that, chirping about the grounds, escaped his scythe only by my littleness. Even now he is whetting one of his smallest razors to clean wipe me out, perhaps. Well!

LETTER CCCXXII

TO WILLIAM HONE

[*August 10, 1827.*]

MY DEAR HONE—We are both excessively grieved at dear Matilda's illness, whom we have ever regarded with the greatest respect. Pray God, your next news, which we shall expect most anxiously, shall give hopes of her recovery.

Mary keeps her health very well, and joins in kind remembrances and best wishes.

A few more Numbers (about 7) will empty my Extract Book; then we will consult about the "Specimens." By then, I hope you will be able to talk about business. How you continue your book at all, and so well, in trying circumstances, I know not. But don't let it stop. Would to God I could help you!—but we have the house full of company, which we came to avoid.

God bless you. C. L.

Mr. Hone,
22, Belvidere Place,
Southwark.

LETTER CCCXXIII

TO BERNARD BARTON

August 28, 1827.

DEAR B. B.—I am thankful to you for your ready compliance with my wishes. Emma is delighted with your verses, to which I have appended

this notice, "The sixth line refers to the child of a dear friend of the author's, named Emma," without which it must be obscure, and have sent it with four album poems of my own (your daughter's with your heading, requesting it a place next mine), to a Mr. Fraser, who is to be editor of a more superb pocket-book than has yet appeared, by far! the property of some wealthy booksellers; but whom, or what its name, I forgot to ask. It is actually to have in it schoolboy exercises by his present Majesty and the late Duke of York. So Lucy will come to Court; how she will be stared at! Wordsworth is named as a contributor. Fraser, whom I have slightly seen, is editor of a forthcome or coming Review of foreign books, and is intimately connected with Lockhart, etc. So I take it that this is a concern of Murray's. Walter Scott also contributes mainly. I have stood off a long time from these annuals, which are ostentatious trumpery, but could not withstand the request of Jameson, a particular friend of mine and Coleridge.

I shall hate myself in frippery, strutting along, and vying finery with beaux and belles, with "future Lord Byrons and sweet L. E. L.'s." Your taste, I see, is less simple than mine, which the difference of our persuasions has doubtless effected. In fact, of late you have so Frenchified your style, larding it with *hors de combats*, and *au desopoirs*, that o' my conscience the Foxian blood is quite dried out of you, and the skipping Monsieur spirit has been in-

fused. Doth Lucy go to balls? I must remodel my lines, which I wrote for her. I hope A. K. keeps to her primitives.

If you have anything you 'd like to send further, I daresay an honourable place would be given to it; but I have not heard from Fraser since I sent mine, nor shall probably again, and therefore I do not solicit it as from him. Yesterday I sent off my tragi-comedy to Mr. Kemble. Wish it luck. I made it all ('t is blank verse, and I think of the true old dramatic cut) or most of it in the green lanes about Enfield, where I am, and mean to remain, in spite of your peremptory doubts on that head. Your refusal to lend your poetical sanction to my "Icon," and your reasons to Evans, are most sensible. Maybe I may hit on a line or two of my own jocular; maybe not. Do you never Londonise again? I should like to talk over old poetry with you of which I have much, and you, I think, little. Do your Drummonds allow no holidays? I would willingly come and work for you a three weeks or so. to let you loose. Would I could sell or give you some of my leisure! Positively, the best thing a man can have to do is nothing, and next to that perhaps—good works. I am but poorlyish, and feel myself writing a dull letter; poorlyish from company; not generally, for I never was better, nor took more walks, fourteen miles a day on an average, with a sporting dog, Dash. You would not know the plain poet, any more than he doth recognise James Nayler trick'd

out *au deserpoy* (how do you spell it?) *En passant, J'aime entendre de mon bon homme sur surveillance de croix, ma pas l'homme figuratif.* Do you understand me?

C. LAMB.

LETTER CCCXXIV

TO WILLIAM HONE

Sunday, September 2 [*1827*].

DEAR HONE—By the verses in yesterday's *Table Book*, sign'd *, I judge you are going on better; but *I want to be resolv'd.* Allsop promised to call on you, and let me know, but has not. Pray attend to this; and send me the number before the present (pages 225 to 256), which my newsman has neglect'd. Your book improves every week. I have written here a thing in 2 acts, and sent it to Covt Gard.

Yours, C. LAMB.

LETTER CCCXXV

TO J. B. DIBDIN

September 5, 1827.

DEAR DIB.—Emma Isola, who is with us, has opened an *album:* bring some verses with you for it on Saturday evening. Any *fun* will do. I am teaching her Latin; you may make something of that. Don't be modest. For in it you *shall* appear,

if I rummage out some of your old pleasant letters for rhymes. But an original is better.

Has your Pa * any scrap? C. L.

We shall be *most* glad to see your sister or *sisters* with you. Can't you contrive it? Write in that case.

* The infantile word for father.

T. Dibdin, Esq.,
Messrs. Railtons',
Old Jewry, London.

LETTER CCCXXVI

September 13, 1827.

DEAR *John*—Your verses are very pleasant, and have been adopted into the splendid Emmatic constellation, where they are not of the least magnitude. She is delighted with their merit and readiness. They are just the thing. The 14th line is found. We advertised it. "Hell is cooling for want of company." We shall make it up, along with our kitchen fire to roast you into our new House where I hope you will find us in a few Sundays. We have actually taken it, and a compact thing it will be.

Kemble does not return till the month's end.

My heart sometimes is good, sometimes bad about it, as the day turns out wet or walky.

Emma has just died, choked with a Gerund-in-dum. On opening her, we found a Participle-in-rus

in the pericardium. The King never dies, which may be the reason that it always *reigns* here.

We join in loves. C. L. his orthograph.

What a pen!

Mr. John B. Dibdin,
Messrs. Rankings,
Old Jewry.

LETTER CCCXXVII

TO THOMAS HOOD

Tuesday [*September 18, 1827*].

DEAR Hood—If I have anything in my head, I will send it to Mr. Watts. Strictly speaking, he should have had my album-verses, but a very intimate friend importun'd me for the trifles, and I believe I forgot Mr. Watts, or lost sight at the time of his similar *souvenir*. Jamieson conveyed the farce from me to Mrs. C. Kemble; *he* will not be in town before the 27th. Give our kind loves to all at Highgate, and tell them that we have finally torn ourselves outright away from Colebrooke, where I had *no* health, and are about to domiciliate for good at Enfield, where I have experienced *good*.

> "Lord, what good hours do we keep!
> How quietly we sleep!"

See the rest in the *Complete Angler*.

We have got our books into our new house. I am a dray-horse, if I was not asham'd of the undigested,

dirty lumber, as I toppled 'em out of the cart, and blest Becky that came with 'em for her having an unstuff'd brain with such rubbish. We shall get in by Michael's Mass. 'T was with some pain we were evuls'd from Colebrook. You may find some of our flesh sticking to the door-posts. To change habitations is to die to them; and in my time I have died seven deaths. But I don't know whether every such change does not bring with it a rejuvenescence. 'T is an enterprise; and shoves back the sense of death's approximating, which, tho' not terrible to me, is at all times particularly distasteful. My house-deaths have generally been periodical, recurring after seven years; but this last is premature by half that time. Cut off in the flower of Colebrook! The Middletonian stream, and all its echoes, mourn. Even minnows dwindle. *A parvis fiunt minimi!* I fear to invite Mrs. Hood to our new mansion, lest she envy it, and hate us. But when we are fairly in, I hope she will come and try it. I heard she and you were made uncomfortable by some unworthy-to-be-cared-for attacks, and have tried to set up a feeble counteraction thro' the *Table Book* of last Saturday. Has it not reach'd you, that you are silent about it? Our new domicile is no manor-house; but new, and externally not inviting, but furnish'd within with every convenience: capital new locks to every door, capital grates in every room; with nothing to pay for incoming; and the rent £10 less than the Islington one. It was built, a few years since, at £1100 ex-

pense, they tell me—and I perfectly believe it. And I get it for £35, exclusive of moderate taxes. We think ourselves most lucky.

It is not our intention to abandon Regent Street, and West-End perambulations (monastic and terrible thought!), but occasionally to breathe the fresher air of the metropolis. We shall put up a bedroom or two (all we want) for occasional ex-rustication, where we shall visit—not be visited. Plays, too, we 'll see—perhaps our own; Urbani Sylvani and Sylvan Urbanuses in turn; courtiers for a sport, then philosophers; old, homely tell-truths and learn-truths in the virtuous shades of Enfield, liars again and mocking gibers in the coffee-houses and resorts of London. What can a mortal desire more for his bi-parted nature?

O, the curds-and-cream you shall eat with us here!

O, the turtle-soup and lobster-salads we shall devour with you there!

O, the old books we shall peruse here!

O, the new nonsense we shall trifle over there!

O, Sir T. Browne, here!

O, Mr. Hood and Mr. Jerdan, there!

Thine,

C. (URBANUS) L. (SYLVANUS)—(ELIA ambo)——

Inclos'd are verses which Emma sat down to write (her first) on the eve after your departure. Of course, they are only for Mrs. H.'s perusal. They will shew, at least, that one of our party is not willing to cut

old friends. What to call 'em I don't know. Blank verse they are not, because of the rhymes; rhymes they are not, because of the blank verse; heroics they are not, because they are lyric; lyric they are not, because of the heroic measure. They must be call'd Emmaics.

The Hoods, 2, Robert Street,
Adelphi, London.

LETTER CCCXXVIII

TO J. B. DIBDIN

September 18, 1827.

MY dear, and now more so, *John*—How that name smacks! What an honest, full, English, and yet withal holy and apostolic sound it bears, above the methodistical priggish Bishoppy name of Timothy, under which I had obscured your merits!

What I think of the paternal verses you shall read within, which I assure you is not pen praise but heart praise.

It is the gem of the Dibdin Muses. I have got all my books into my new house, and their readers in a fortnight will follow, to whose joint converse nobody shall be more welcome than you, and *any of yours.*

The house is perfection to our use and comfort. Milton is come. I wish Wordsworth were here to meet him. The next importation is of pots and sauce-pans, window curtains, crockery, and such base ware.

TO COLBURN

The pleasure of moving, when Becky moves for you. O the moving Becky! I hope you will come and *warm* the house with the first.

From my temporary domicile, Enfield.

Elia, that "is to go."

Mr. John Dibdin,
Messrs. Rankings,
Old Jewry.

LETTER CCCXXIX

TO HENRY COLBURN

Enfield Chase Side,
September 25, 1827.

DEAR SIR—I beg leave in the warmest manner to recommend to your notice Mr. Moxon, the bearer of this, if by any chance yourself should want a steady hand in your business, or know of any Publisher that may want such a one. He is at present in the house of Messrs. Longman and Co., where he has been established for more than six years, and has the conduct of one of the four departments of the Country Line. A difference respecting salary, which he expected to be a little raised on his last promotion, makes him wish to try to better himself. I believe him to be a young man of the highest integrity and a thorough man of business, and should not have taken the liberty of recommending him, if I had not thought him capable of being highly useful.

I am, Sir, with great respect, your h'ble servant,

CHARLES LAMB.

LETTER CCCXXX

TO P. G. PATMORE

Mrs. Leishman's, Chase, Enfield,
September 1827.

DEAR P.—Excuse my anxiety, but how is Dash? I should have asked if Mrs. Patmore kept her rules, and was improving; but Dash came uppermost. The order of our thoughts should be the order of our writing. Goes he muzzled, or *aperto ore?* Are his intellects sound, or does he wander a little in *his* conversation? You cannot be too careful to watch the first symptoms of incoherence. The first illogical snarl he makes, to St. Luke's with him! All the dogs here are going mad, if you believe the overseers; but I protest they seem to me very rational and collected. But nothing is so deceitful as mad people, to those who are not used to them. Try him with hot water: if he won't lick it up it is a sign he does not like it. Does his tail wag horizontally, or perpendicularly? That has decided the fate of many dogs in Enfield. Is his general deportment cheerful? I mean when he is pleased—for otherwise there is no judging. You can't be too careful. Has he bit any of the children yet? If he has, have them shot, and keep *him* for curiosity, to see if it was the hydrophobia. They say all our army in India had it at one time; but that was in *Hyder*-Ally's time. Do you get paunch for him? Take care the sheep was sane. You might pull out his teeth (if he would let you),

and then you need not mind if he were as mad as a Bedlamite. It would be rather fun to see his odd ways. It might amuse Mrs. P.—— and the children. They 'd have more sense than he. He 'd be like a fool kept in a family, to keep the household in good humour with their own understanding. You might teach him the mad dance, set to the mad howl. *Madge Owlet* would be nothing to him. "My! how he capers!" [*In the margin is written, "One of the children speaks this."*] . . . What I scratch out is a German quotation, from Lessing, on the bite of rabid animals; but I remember you don't read German. But Mrs. P—— may, so I wish I had let it stand. The meaning in English is—"Avoid to approach an animal suspected of madness, as you would avoid fire or a precipice," which I think is a sensible observation. The Germans are certainly profounder than we. If the slightest suspicion arises in your breast that all is not right with him, muzzle him and lead him in a string (common pack-thread will do—he don't care for twist) to Mr. Hood's, his quondam master, and he 'll take him in at any time. You may mention your suspicion, or not, as you like, or as you think it may wound or not Mr. H.'s feelings. Hood, I know, will wink at a few follies in Dash, in consideration of his former sense. Besides, Hood is deaf, and if you hinted anything, ten to one he would not hear you. Besides, you will have discharged your conscience, and laid the child at the right door, as they say.

We are dawdling our time away very idly and pleasantly at a Mrs. Leishman's, Chase, Enfield, where, if you come a-hunting, we can give you cold meat and a tankard. Her husband is a tailor; but that, you know, does not make her one. I knew a jailor (which rhymes), but his wife was a fine lady.

Let us hear from you respecting Mrs. P——'s regimen. I send my love in a —— to Dash.

C. Lamb.

[What follows was written on the *outside* of the letter:—]

Seriously, I wish you would call upon Hood when you are that way. He 's a capital fellow. I 've sent him two poems, one ordered by his wife, and written to order; and 't is a week since, and I 've not heard from him. I fear something is the matter.

Our kindest remembrance to Mrs. P.

LETTER CCCXXXI

TO H. CRABB ROBINSON

Chase Side, October 1, 1827.

DEAR R.—I am settled for life I hope at Enfield. I have taken the prettiest, compactest house I ever saw, near to Antony Robinson's! but, alas! at the expense of poor Mary, who was taken ill of her old complaint the night before we got into it. So I must suspend the pleasure I expected in the surprise you would have had in coming down,

and finding us householders. Farewell, till we can all meet comfortable. Pray apprise Martin Burney. Him I longed to have seen with you; but our house is too small to meet either of you without *her* knowledge.

God bless you.

LETTER CCCXXXII

TO J. B. DIBDIN

October 2, 1827.

MY DEAR DIBDIN—It gives me great pain to have to say that I cannot have the pleasure of seeing you for some time. We are in our house, but Mary has been seized with one of her periodical disorders—a temporary derangement—which commonly lasts for two months. You shall have the first notice of her convalescence. Can you not send your manuscript by the coach? directed to Chase Side, next to Mr. Westwood's Insurance Office. I will take great care of it.

Yours most truly, C. LAMB.

LETTER CCCXXXIII

TO BARRON FIELD

October 4, 1827.

I AM not in humour to return a fit reply to your pleasant letter. We are fairly housed at Enfield, and an angel shall not persuade me to wicked Lon-

don again. We have now six Sabbath-days in a week for—*none!* The change has worked on my sister's mind to make her ill; and I must wait a tedious time before we can hope to enjoy this place in unison. Enjoy it, when she recovers, I know we shall. I see no shadow, but in her illness, for repenting the step! For Mathews—I know my own utter unfitness for such a task. I am no hand at describing costumes, a great requisite in an account of mannered pictures. I have not the slightest acquaintance with pictorial language even. An imitator of me, or rather pretender to be *me*, in his "Rejected Articles," has made me minutely describe the dresses of the poissardes at Calais!—I could as soon resolve Euclid. I have no eye for forms and fashions. I substitute analysis, and get rid of the phenomenon by slurring in for it its impression. I am sure you must have observed this defect, or peculiarity, in my writings; else the delight would be incalculable in doing such a thing for Mathews—whom I greatly like—and Mrs. Mathews, whom I almost greatlier like. What a feast 't would be to be sitting at the pictures painting 'em into words; but I could almost as soon make words into pictures. I speak this deliberately, and not out of modesty. I pretty well know what I can't do.

My sister's verses are homely, but just what they should be; I send them, not for the poetry, but the good sense and good will of them. I was beginning to transcribe; but Emma is sadly jealous of its get-

ting into more hands, and I won't spoil it in her eyes by divulging it. Come to Enfield, and *read it.* As my poor cousin, the bookbinder, now with God, told me most sentimentally, that having purchased a picture of fish at a dead man's sale, his heart ached to see how the widow grieved to part with it, being her dear husband's favourite; and he almost apologised for his generosity by saying he could not help telling the widow she was "welcome to come and look at it"—*e.g.* at *his house*—"as often as she pleased." There was the germ of generosity in an uneducated mind. He had just *reading* enough from the backs of books for the "nec sinit esse feros"; had he read inside, the same impulse would have led him to give back the two-guinea thing—with a request to see it, now and then, at *her* house. We are parroted into delicacy.—Thus you have a tale for a Sonnet.

Adieu! with (imagine both) our loves. C. L.

LETTER CCCXXXIV

TO H. DODWELL

October 7, 1827.

LET us meet if possible when you hobble to *town.* *Enfield Chase,* nearly opposite to the 1st chapel; or better to define it, east side opposite a white House in which *a* Mrs. Vaughan (in ill health) still resides.

MY DEAR DODWELL—Your little pig found his way to Enfield this morning without his feet, or rather

his little feet came first, and as I guessed the rest of him soon followed. He is quite a beauty. It was a pity to kill him, or *rather*, as Rice would say, it would have been a pity not to kill him in his state of innocence. He might have lived to be corrupted by the ways of the world, and for all his delicate promise have turned out, like an old Tea Broker you and I remember, a lump of fat rusty Bacon. Bacon was a Beast, my friend at Calne, Marsh, used to say—or was it Bendry? A rasher of the latter still hangs up in Leadenhall. Your kind letter has left a relish upon my taste; it read warm and short as to-morrow's crackling.

I am not quite so comfortable *at home* yet as I should be else in the neatest compactest house I ever got—a perfect God-send; but for some weeks I must enjoy it alone. *She* always comes round again. It is a house of a few years' standing, built (for its size with every convenience) by an old humourist for himself, which he tired of as soon as he got warm in it. Grates, locks, a pump, convenience indescribable, and cheap as if it had been old and craved repairs. For me, who always take the first thing that offers, how lucky that the best should first offer itself! My books, my prints are up, and I seem (so like this room I write in is to a room there) to have come here transported in the night, like Gulliver in his flying house; and to add to the deception, the New River has come down from Islington with me. 'T was

what I wished—to move my *house*, and I have realised it. Only instead of company seven nights in the week, I see my friends on the First Day of it, and enjoy six real Sabbaths. The Museum is a loss, but I am not so far but I can visit it occasionally; and I have exhausted the Plays there.

"Indisputably I shall allow no sage and onion to be cramm'd into the throat of so tender a suckling.

"Bread and milk with some odoriferous mint, and the liveret minced.

"Come and tell me when he cries, that I may catch his little eyes.

"And do it nice and *crips*." (That's the Cook's word.) You 'll excuse me, I have been only speaking to Becky about the dinner to-morrow. After it, a glass of seldom-drunk wine to my friend Dodwell, and, if he will give a stranger leave, to Mrs. Dodwell: then to the memory of the last, and of the last but one, learned Dodwell, of whom, but not whom, I have read so much. The next to the "Outward and Homeward bound ships"—and, if the bottle lasts, to the Chairman, Deputy-Chairman, the Court of Directors, the Secretary, the Treasurer, and Accomptant-General, of the East India Company, with a blunt bumper at parting to P——. All I can do, I cannot make P—— look like a G——n, yet he is portly, majestic, hath his nods, his condescensions, his variety of behaviour to suit your Director, your Upper Clerk, your Ryles, and your

Winfields; he tempers mirth with gravity, gives no affront, and expects to receive none, is honourable, mannered, of good bearing, looks like a man who, accustomed to respect others, silently extorts respect from them, has it as a sort of *in course;* without claiming it, finds it. What do I miss in him, then, of the essentials of gentlemanhood? He is right sterling—but then, somehow, he always has that d——d large Goldsmith's Hall mark staring upon him. Possibly he is too fat for a gentleman—then I think of Charles Fox in the Dropsy; and the burly old Duke of Norfolk, a nobleman, every stun of him!

I am afraid now you and —— are gone, there 's scarce an officer in the Civil Service quite comes up to my notion of a gentleman. D—— certainly does *not,* nor his friend B——.

C—— bobs. K—— *curtsies.* W—— bows like the son of a citizen; F—— like a village apothecary; C—— like the Squire's younger Brother; R—— like a crocodile on his hind legs; H—— never bows at all—at least to me. S—— spulters and stutters. W—— halters and smatters. R—— is a coal-heaver. Wolf wants my clothing. C—— simmers, but never boils over. D—— is a Butterfirkin, salt butter. C——, a pepper-box, cayenne. For A——, E——, and O——, I can answer that they have not the slightest pretensions to anything but rusticity. Marry, the remaining vowels had something of civility about them. Can you make top or tail of this nonsense, or tell where it begins? I will page it. How an error

in the outset infects to the end of life, or of a sheet of paper! Cordially adieu. C. LAMB.

H. Dodwell, Esq.
Maidenhead,
Berks.

LETTER CCCXXXV

TO WILLIAM HONE

[*October 1827.*]

DEAR HONE—I was most sensibly gratified by receiving the T. B. on Friday evening at Enfield! !

Thank you. In haste, C. L.

Don't spare the Extracts. They'll eke out till Christmas.

How is your daughter?

Mr. Hone,
22, Belvidere Place,
Southwark.

LETTER CCCXXXVI

TO BERNARD BARTON

Chase Side, Enfield,
November 1827.

MY DEAR B. B.—You will understand my silence when I tell you that my sister, on the very eve of entering into a new house we have taken at Enfield, was surprised with an attack of one of her sad long illnesses, which deprive me of her so-

ciety, though not of her domestication, for eight or nine weeks together. I see her, but it does her no good. But for this, we have the snuggest, most comfortable house, with everything most compact and desirable. Colebrook is a wilderness. The books, prints, etc., are come here, and the New River came down with us. The familiar prints, the bust, the Milton, seem scarce to have changed their rooms. One of her last observations was "How frightfully like this room is to our room in Islington!"—our upstairs room, she meant. How I hope you will come some better day, and judge of it! We have tried quiet here for four months, and I will answer for the comfort of it enduring.

On emptying my bookshelves I found an Ulysses, which I will send to A. K. when I go to town, for her acceptance—unless the book be out of print. One likes to have one copy of everything one does. I neglected to keep one of "Poetry for Children," the joint production of Mary and me, and it is not to be had for love or money. It had in the title-page "by the Author of Mrs. Lester's School." Know you any one that has it, and would exchange it?

Strolling to Waltham Cross the other day, I hit off these lines. It is one of the crosses which Edward I. caused to be built for his wife at every town where her corpse rested between Northamptonshire and London:—

> A stately cross each sad spot doth attest,
> Whereat the corpse of Eleanor did rest,

TO BARTON

From Harby fetch'd—her spouse so honour'd her—
To sleep with royal dust at Westminster.
And, if less pompous obsequies were thine,
Duke Brunswick's daughter, princely Caroline,
Grudge not, great ghost, nor count thy funeral losses:
Thou in thy life-time had'st thy share of crosses.

My dear B.—My head aches with this little excursion. Pray accept two sides for three for once, and believe me yours sadly, C. L.

LETTER CCCXXXVII

December 4, 1827.

MY DEAR B. B.—I have scarce spirits to write, yet am harassed with not writing. Nine weeks are completed, and Mary does not get any better. It is perfectly exhausting. Enfield, and everything, is very gloomy. But for long experience I should fear her ever getting well. I feel most thankful for the spinsterly attentions of your sister. Thank the kind "knitter in the sun!" What nonsense seems verse, when one is seriously out of hope and spirits! I mean, that at this time I have some nonsense to write, under pain of incivility. Would to the fifth heaven no coxcombess had invented Albums!

I have not had a Bijoux, nor the slightest notice from Pickering about omitting four out of five of my things. The best thing is never to hear of such a thing as a bookseller again, or to think there are publishers. Second-hand stationers and old book-stalls

for me. Authorship should be an idea of the past. Old kings, old bishops, are venerable; all present is hollow. I cannot make a letter. I have no straw, not a pennyworth of chaff, only this may stop your kind importunity to know about us. Here is a comfortable house, but no tenants. *One* does not make a household. Do not think I am quite in despair; but, in addition to hope protracted, I have a stupifying cold and obstructing headache, and the sun is dead.

I will not fail to apprise you of the revival of a beam. Meantime accept this, rather than think I have forgotten you all. Best remembrances.

Yours and theirs truly, C. Lamb.

LETTER CCCXXXVIII

TO LEIGH HUNT

[*December*] *1827.*

DEAR H.—I am here almost in the eleventh week of the longest illness my sister ever had, and no symptoms of amendment. Some had begun, but relapsed with a change of nurse. If she ever gets well, you will like my house, and I shall be happy to show you Enfield country.

As to my head, it is perfectly at your or any one's service; either Myers' or Hazlitt's,—which last (done fifteen or twenty years since) White, of the Accountant's Office, India House, has; he lives in Kentish Town—I forget where; but is to be found in Leadenhall daily. Take your choice. I should be proud to

hang up as an alehouse-sign even; or, rather, I care not about my head or anything, but how we are to get well again, for I am tired out.

God bless you and yours from the worst calamity.

Yours truly, C. L.

Kindest remembrances to Mrs. Hunt. H.'s is in a queer dress. M.'s would be preferable *ad populum.*

LETTER CCCXXXIX

TO THOMAS ALLSOP

December 20, 1827.

MY DEAR ALLSOP—I have writ to say to you that I hope to have a comfortable X-mas-day with Mary, and I cannot bring myself to go from home at present. Your kind offer, and the kind consent of the young Lady to come, we feel as we should do; pray accept all of you our kindest thanks: at present I think a Visitor (good and excellent as we remember her to be) might a little put us out of our way. Emma is with us, and our small house just holds us, without obliging Mary to sleep with Becky, etc.

We are going on extremely comfortable, and shall soon be in capacity of seeing our friends. Much weakness is left still. With thanks and old remembrances,

Yours, C. L.

LETTER CCCXL

TO BERNARD BARTON

[*December*] *1827.*

MY DEAR B.—We are all pretty well again and comfortable, and I take a first opportunity of sending the "Adventures of Ulysses," hoping that among us—Homer, Chapman, and Co.—we shall afford you some pleasure. I fear it is out of print; if not, A. K. will accept it, with wishes it were bigger; if another copy is not to be had, it reverts to me and my heirs *for ever*. With it I send a trumpery book; to which, without my knowledge, the editor of the Bijoux has contributed Lucy's verses; I am ashamed to ask her acceptance of the trash accompanying it. Adieu to Albums—for a great while—I said when I came here, and had not been fixed for two days; but my landlord's daughter (not at the Pothouse) requested me to write in her female friends' and in her own. If I go to —— thou art there also, O all pervading Album! All over the Leeward Islands, in Newfoundland, and the Back Settlements, I understand there is no other reading. They haunt me. I die of Albophobia! C. L.

LETTER CCCXLI

[*December*] *1827.*

MY DEAR B. B.—A gentleman I never saw before brought me your welcome present. Imagine a scraping, fiddling, fidgeting, petit-maître

of a dancing school advancing into my plain parlour with a toupée and a sideling bow, and presenting the book as if he had been handing a glass of lemonade to a young miss: imagine this, and contrast it with the serious nature of the book presented! Then task your imagination, revel ing this picture, to conceive of quite an opposite messenger, a lean, strait-locked, whey-faced Methodist, for such was he in reality who brought it, the Genius (it seems) of the Wesleyan Magazine. Certes, friend B., thy Widow's Tale is too horrible, spite of the lenitives of Religion, to embody in verse; I hold prose to be the appropriate expositor of such atrocities! No offence, but it is a cordial that makes the heart sick. Still thy skill in compounding it I do not deny. I turn to what gave me less mingled pleasure. I find mark'd with pencil these pages in thy pretty book, and fear I have been penurious:—

Page 52, 53—Capital.
„ 59—6th stanza, exquisite simile.
„ 61—11th stanza, equally good.
„ 108—3rd stanza, I long to see Van Balen.
„ 111—A downright good sonnet. *Dixi.*
„ 153—Lines at the bottom.

So you see, I read, hear, and *mark*, if I don't learn. In short, this little volume is no discredit to any of your former, and betrays none of the senility you fear about. *Apropos* of Van Balen, an artist who painted me lately had painted a blackamoor praying, and not filling his canvas, stuffed in his little girl

aside of Blackey, gaping at him unmeaningly; and then did n't know what to call it. Now for a picture to be promoted to the Exhibition (Suffolk Street) as *Historical*, a subject is requisite. What does me? I but christened it the "Young Catechist" and furbish'd it with dialogue following, which dubb'd it an Historical Painting. Nothing to a friend at need.

"While this tawny Ethiop prayeth,
Painter, who is she that stayeth
By, with skin of whitest lustre;
Sunny locks, a shining cluster;
Saint-like seeming to direct him
To the Power that must protect him?
Is she of the heav'n born Three,
Meek Hope, strong Faith, sweet Charity?
Or some Cherub?
"They you mention
Far transcend my weak invention.
'T is a simple Christian child,
Missionary young and mild,
From her store of script'ral knowledge
(Bible-taught without a college),
Which by reading she could gather,
Teaches him to say Our Father
To the common Parent, who
Colour not respects, nor hue.
White and black in Him have part,
Who looks not to the skin, but heart."

When I 'd done it, the artist (who had clapt in Miss merely as a fill-space) swore I exprest his full meaning, and the damosel bridled up into a missionary's vanity. I like verses to explain pictures; seldom pic-

tures to illustrate poems. Your woodcut is a rueful lignum mortis. By the by, is the widow likely to marry again?

I am giving the fruit of my old play reading at the Museum to Hone, who sets forth a portion weekly in the *Table Book*. Do you see it? How is Mitford? —I 'll just hint that the pitcher, the chord, and the bowl are a little too often repeated (passim) in your book, and that in page 17, last line but 4, *him* is put for *he;* but the poor widow I take it had small leisure for grammatical niceties. Don't you see there 's *he, myself,* and *him;* why not both *him?* likewise *imperviously* is cruelly spelt *imperiously.* These are trifles, and I honestly like your book, and you for giving it, though I really am ashamed of so many presents. I can think of no news; therefore I will end with mine and Mary's kindest remembrances to you and yours.

C. L.

CHAPTER VI

1828—1834

LETTERS TO BERNARD BARTON, COWDEN CLARKE, PROCTER, MOXON, AND OTHERS

LETTER CCCXLII

TO THOMAS ALLSOP

January 2, 1828.

DEAR ALLSOP—I have been very poorly and nervous lately, but am recovering sleep, etc. I do not write or make engagements for particular days: but I need not say how pleasant your dropping in any Sunday morning would be. Perhaps Jameson would accompany you. Pray beg him to keep an accurate record of the warning I sent him to old Pau., for I dread lest he should at the 12 months' end deny the warning. The house is his daughter's, but we took it through him, and have paid the rent to his receipts for his daughter's. Consult J. if he thinks the warning sufficient. I am very nervous, or have been, about the house; lost my sleep, and expected to be ill; but slumbered gloriously last night, golden slumbers. I shall not relapse; you fright me with your inserted slips in the most welcome Atlas. They begin to charge double for it, and call it two sheets. How can I confute them by opening it, when a note of yours might slip out, and we get in a hobble? When you write, write real letters. Mary's best love and mine to Mrs. A.

Yours ever, C. LAMB.

LETTER CCCXLIII

TO C. COWDEN CLARKE

Enfield, February 25 [1828].

MY DEAR CLARKE—You have been accumulating on me such a heap of pleasant obligations, that I feel uneasy in writing as to a Benefactor. Your smaller contributions, the little weekly rills, are refreshments in the Desart; but your large books were feasts. I hope Mrs. Hazlitt, to whom I encharged it, has taken Hunt's *Lord B.* to the Novellos. His picture of Literary Lordship is as pleasant as a disagreeable subject can be made; his own poor man's Education at dear Christ's is as good and hearty as the subject. Hazlitt's speculative episodes are capital; I skip the Battles. But how did I deserve to have the book? The "Companion" has too much of Madame Pasta. Theatricals have ceased to be popular attractions. His walk home after the play is as good as the best of the old "Indicators." The watchmen are emboxed in a niche of fame, save the skaiting one that must be still fugitive. I wish I could send a scrap for goodwill. But I have been most seriously unwell and nervous a long, long time. I have scarce mustered courage to begin this short note, but conscience duns me.

I had a pleasant letter from your sister, greatly over-acknowledging my poor sonnet. I think I should have replied to it, but tell her I think so. Alas! for sonneting, 't is as the nerves are; all the

summer I was dawdling among green lanes, and verses came as thick as fancies. I am sunk winterly below prose and zero.

But I trust the vital principle is only as under snow. That I shall yet laugh again.

I suppose the great change of place affects me; but I could not have lived in Town; I could not bear company.

I see Novello flourishes in the Del Capo line, and dedications are not forgotten. I read the *Atlas.* When I pitched on the Dedication, I looked for the Broom of "*Cowden* knows" to be harmonised, but 't was summat of Rossini's.

I want to hear about Hone. Does he stand above water? how is his son? I have delay'd writing to him till it seems impossible. Break the ice for me.

The wet ground here is intolerable, the sky above clear and delusive; but under foot quagmires from night showers, and I am cold-footed and moisture-abhorring as a cat; nevertheless I yesterday tramped to Waltham Cross; perhaps the poor bit of exertion necessary to scribble this was owing to that unusual bracing.

If I get out, I shall get stout, and then something will out—I mean for the "Companion"—you see I rhyme insensibly.

Traditions are rife here of one Clarke a schoolmaster and a runaway pickle named Holmes; but much obscurity hangs over it. Is it possible they can be any relations?

'T is worth the research, when you can find a sunny day, with ground firm, etc. Master Sexton is intelligent, and for half-a-crown he 'll pick you up a Father.

In truth, we shall be glad to see any of the Novellian circle, middle of the week such as can come, or Sunday, as can't. But Spring will burgeon out quickly, and then we 'll talk more.

You 'd like to see the improvements on the Chase, the new cross in the market-place, the Chandler's shop from whence the rods were fetch'd. They are raised a farthing since the spread of Education. But perhaps you don't care to be reminded of the Holofernes' days, and nothing remains of the old laudable profession but the clear, firm impossible-to-be-mistaken schoolmaster text hand with which is subscribed the ever-welcome name of Chas. Cowden C. Let me crowd in both our loves to all.

C. L.

[*Added on the fold-down of the letter:*] Let me never be forgotten to include in my remembᶜᵉˢ my good friend and whilom correspondent, Master Stephen.

How, especially, is Victoria?

I try to remember all I used to meet at Shacklewell. The little household, cake-producing, wine-bringing out, Emma—the old servant, that did n't stay, and ought to have stayed, and was always very dirty and friendly; and Miss H., the counter-tenor with a fine voice, whose sister married Thurtell. They

all live in my mind's eye, and Mr. N.'s and Holmes's walks with us half back after supper. Troja fuit!

LETTER CCCXLIV

TO MR. MOXON

March 19, 1828.

MY DEAR M.—It is my firm determination to have nothing to do with "Forget-me-Nots"; pray excuse me as civilly as you can to Mr. Hurst. I will take care to refuse any other applications. The things which Pickering has, if to be had again, I have promised absolutely, you know, to poor Hood, from whom I had a melancholy epistle yesterday; besides that Emma has decided objections to her own and her friend's album verses being published; but if she gets over that, they are decidedly Hood's.

Till we meet, farewell. Loves to Dash. C. L.

LETTER CCCXLV

TO REV. E. IRVING

Enfield Chase, April 3, 1828.

DEAR SIR—I take advantage from the kindness which I have experienced from you in a slight acquaintance to introduce to you my very respected friend Mr. Hone, who is of opinion that your interference in a point which he will mention to you may prove of essential benefit to him in some pres-

ent difficulties. I should not take this liberty if I did not feel that you are a person not to be prejudiced by an obnoxious name. All that I know of him obliges me to respect him, and to request your kindness for him, if you can serve him.

With feelings of kindest respect, I am, dear Sir, yours truly, CHAS. LAMB.

LETTER CCCXLVI

TO BERNARD BARTON

April 21, 1828.

DEAR B. B.—You must excuse my silence. I have been in very poor health and spirits, and cannot write letters. I only write to assure you, as you wish'd, of my existence. All that which Mitford tells you of H.'s book is rhodomontade; only H. has written unguardedly about me, and nothing makes a man more foolish than his own foolish panegyric. But I am pretty well cased to flattery, and its contrary. Neither affect me a turnip's worth. Do you see the author of "May you like it"? Do you write to him? Will you give my present plea to him of ill health for not acknowledging a pretty book with a pretty frontispiece he sent me. He is most esteemed by me. As for subscribing to books, in plain truth I am a man of reduced income, and don't allow myself 12 shillings a-year to buy old books with; which must be my excuse. I am truly sorry for Murray's demur; but I wash my hands of all booksellers, and

hope to know them no more. I am sick and poorly, and must leave off with our joint kind remembrances to your daughter and friend A. K.

C. L.

LETTER CCCXLVII

TO WILLIAM HONE

Enfield, Wednesday,
May 2, 1828.

DEAR H.—Valter Vilson dines with us to-morrow. Vell! How I should like to see Hone!

C. LAMB.

Mr. Hone,
22, Belvidere Place,
near the Obelisk, Southwark.

LETTER CCCXLVIII

TO MR. MOXON

Enfield, May 3, 1828.

DEAR M.—My friend Patmore, author of the *Months*, a very pretty publication,—of sundry Essays in the *London*, *New Monthly*, etc., wants to dispose of a volume or two of "Tales." Perhaps they might chance to suit Hurst; but be that as it may, he will call upon you *under favour of my recommendation;* and as he is returning to France, where he lives, if you can do anything for him in the Treaty line, to save him dancing over the Channel every week, I am sure you will. I said I 'd never trouble

you again; but how vain are the resolves of mortal man! P. is a very hearty, friendly fellow, and was poor John Scott's Second, as I will be yours when you want one. May you never be mine!

Yours truly, C. L.

Mr. Moxon,
Messrs. Hurst and Co.,
Booksellers,
St. Paul's Churchyard.

LETTER CCCXLIX

TO REV. H. F. CARY

June 10, 1828.

DEAR SIR—I long to see Wordsworth once more before he goes hence, but it would be at the expense of health and comfort my infirmities cannot afford. Once only I have been at a dinner party, to meet him, for a whole year past, and I do not know that I am not the worse for it now. There is a necessity for my drinking too much (don't show this to the Bishop of ——, your friend) at and after dinner; then I require spirits at night to allay the crudity of the weaker Bacchus; and in the morning I cool my parched stomach with a fiery libation. Then I am aground in town, and call upon my London friends, and get new wets of ale, porter, etc.; then ride home, drinking where the coach stops, as duly as Edward set up his Waltham Crosses. This, or near it, was the process of my experiment of din-

ing at Talfourd's to meet Wordsworth, and I am not well now. Now let me beg that we may meet here with assured safety to both sides. Darley and Procter come here on Sunday morning; pray arrange to come along with them. Here I can be tolerably moderate. In town, the very air of town turns my head and is intoxication enough, if intoxication knew a limit. I am a poor country mouse, and your cates disturb me. Tell me you will come. We have a bed, and a half or three quarters bed, at all your services; and the adjoining inn has many. If engaged on Sunday, tell me when you will come; a Saturday will suit as well. I would that Wordsworth would come too. Pray believe that 't is my health only, which brought me here, that frightens me from the wicked town. Mary joins in kind remembrances to Mrs. Cary and yourself.

Yours truly, C. LAMB.

LETTER CCCL

TO MRS. BASIL MONTAGU

[Summer 1828.]

DEAR MADAM—I return your list with my name. I should be sorry that any respect should be going on towards Clarkson, and I be left out of the conspiracy. Otherwise I frankly own that to pillarise a man's good feelings in his lifetime is not to my taste. Monuments to goodness, even after death, are equivocal. I turn away from Howard's, I scarce

know why. Goodness blows no trumpet, nor desires to have it blown. *We should be modest for a modest man*—as he is for himself. The vanities of life—art, poetry, skill military—are subjects for trophies; not the silent thoughts arising in a good man's mind in lonely places. Was I Clarkson, I should never be able to walk or ride near the spot again. Instead of bread, we are giving him a stone. Instead of the locality recalling the noblest moment of his existence, it is a place at which his friends (that is, himself) blow to the world, "What a good man is he!" I sat down upon a hillock at Forty Hill yesternight,—a fine contemplative evening,—with a thousand good speculations about mankind. How I yearned with cheap benevolence! I shall go and inquire of the stone-cutter, that cuts the tombstones here, what a stone with a short inscription will cost; just to say, "Here C. Lamb loved his brethren of mankind." Everybody will come there to love. As I can't well put my own name, I shall put about a subscription:

Mrs. ——	£0	5	0
Procter	0	2	6
G. Dyer	0	1	0
Mr. Godwin	0	0	0
Mrs. Godwin	0	0	0
Mr. Irving			a watch-chain.
Mr. ——			the proceeds of —— first edition.
	£0	8	6

I scribble in haste from here, where we shall be

some time. Pray request Mr. Montagu to advance the guinea for me, which shall faithfully be forthcoming, and pardon me that I don't see the proposal in quite the light that he may. The kindness of his motives, and his power of appreciating the noble passage, I thoroughly agree in.

With most kind regards to him, I conclude, dear Madam, yours truly, C. LAMB.

From Mrs. Leishman's, Chase, Enfield.

LETTER CCCLI

TO B. R. HAYDON

August 1828.

DEAR HAYDON—I have been tardy in telling you that your Chairing the Member gave me great pleasure—'t is true broad Hogarthian fun, the High Sheriff capital. Considering, too, that you had the materials imposed upon you, and that you did not select them from the rude world as H. did, I hope to see many more such from your hand. If the former picture went beyond this I have had a loss, and the King a bargain. I longed to rub the back of my hand across the hearty canvas that two senses might be gratified. Perhaps the subject is a little discordantly placed opposite to another act of Chairing, where the huzzas were Hosannahs! but I was pleased to see so many of my old acquaintances brought together notwithstanding.

Believe me, yours truly, C. LAMB.

LETTER CCCLII

TO BERNARD BARTON

October 11, 1828.

A SPLENDID edition of "Bunyan's Pilgrim"! Why, the thought is enough to turn one's moral stomach. His cockle-hat and staff transformed to a smart cock'd beaver and a jemmy cane; his amice gray, to the last Regent Street cut; and his painful palmer's pace to the modern swagger. Stop thy friend's sacrilegious hand. Nothing can be done for B. but to reprint the old cuts in as homely but good a style as possible. The Vanity Fair, and the Pilgrims there—the silly-soothness in his setting-out countenance—the Christian Idiocy (in a good sense) of his admiration of the shepherds on the Delectable Mountains; the lions, so truly allegorical, and remote from any similitude to Pidcock's; the great head (the author's), capacious of dreams and similitudes, dreaming in the dungeon. Perhaps you don't know my edition, what I had when a child. If you do, can you bear new designs from Martin, enamelled into copper or silver plate by Heath, accompanied with verses from Mrs. Hemans's pen, O how unlike his own!

"Wouldst thou divert thyself from melancholy?
Wouldst thou be pleasant, yet be far from folly?
Wouldst thou read riddles, and their explanation?
Or else be drownèd in thy contemplation?
Dost thou love picking meat? or wouldst thou see

TO BARTON

A man in the clouds, and hear him speak to thee?
Wouldst thou be in a dream, and yet not sleep?
Or wouldst thou in a moment laugh and weep?
Or wouldst thou lose thyself, and catch no harm,
And find thyself again without a charm?
Wouldst read *thyself*, and read thou knowest not what,
And yet know whether thou art blest or not
By reading the same lines? O then come hither,
And lay my book, thy head, and heart together.

"JOHN BUNYAN."

Show me such poetry in any of the fifteen forthcoming combinations of show and emptiness, yclept "Annuals." So there's verses for thy verses; and now let me tell you, that the sight of your hand gladdened me. I have been daily trying to write to you, but paralysed. You have spurred me on this tiny effort, and at intervals I hope to hear from and talk to you. But my spirits have been in an opprest way for a long long time, and they are things which must be to you of faith, for who can explain depression? Yes, I am hooked into the "Gem," but only for some lines written on a dead infant of the Editor's, which being, as it were, his property, I could not refuse their appearing; but I hate the paper, the type, the gloss, the dandy plates, the names of contributors poked up into your eyes in first page, and whistled through all the covers of magazines, the barefaced sort of emulation, the immodest candidateship, brought into so little space—in those old "Londons" a signature was lost in the wood of matter, the paper coarse (till

latterly, which spoiled them); in short, I detest to appear in an Annual. What a fertile genius (and a quiet good soul withal) is Hood! He has fifty things in hand: farces to supply the Adelphi for the season; a comedy for one of the great theatres, just ready; a whole entertainment, by himself, for Mathews and Yates to figure in; a meditated Comic Annual for next year, to be nearly done by himself. You 'd like him very much.

Wordsworth, I see, has a good many pieces announced in one of 'em, not our *Gem*. W. Scott has distributed himself like a bribe haunch among 'em. Of all the poets, Cary has had the good sense to keep quite clear of 'em, with clergy-gentlemanly right notions. Don't think I set up for being proud on this point; I like a bit of flattery, tickling my vanity, as well as any one. But these pompous masquerades without masks (naked names or faces) I hate. So there 's a bit of my mind. Besides, they infallibly cheat you; I mean the booksellers. If I get but a copy, I only expect it from Hood's being my friend. Coleridge has lately been here. He too is deep among the prophets, the year-servers,—the mob of gentlemen annuals. But they 'll cheat him, I know. And now, dear B. B., the sun shining out merrily, and the dirty clouds we had yesterday having washed their own faces clean with their own rain, tempts me to wander up Winchmore Hill, or into some of the delightful vicinages of Enfield, which I hope to show

you at some time when you can get a few days up to the great town. Believe me, it would give both of us great pleasure to show you all three (we can lodge you) our pleasant farms and villages.

We both join in kindest loves to you and yours.

C. LAMB, *redivivus.*

LETTER CCCLIII

TO THOMAS HOOD

Enfield [*October 1828*].

DEAR LAMB—You are an impudent varlet; but I will keep your secret. We dine at Ayrton's on Thursday, and shall try to find Sarah and her two spare beds for that night only. Miss M. and her tragedy may be dished: so may *not* you and your rib. Health attend you.

Yours, T. HOOD, ESQ.

Miss Bridget Hood sends love.

LETTER CCCLIV

TO C. COWDEN CLARKE

[*Enfield, October 1828.*]

DEAR CLARKE—We did expect to see you with Victoria and the Novellos before this, and do not quite understand why we have not. Mrs. N. and

V. [Vincent] promised us after the York expedition; a day being named before, which fail'd. 'T is not too late. The autumn leaves drop gold, and Enfield is beautifuller—to a common eye—than when you lurked at the Greyhound. Benedicks are close; but how I so totally missed you at that time, going for my morning cup of ale duly, is a mystery. 'T was stealing a match before one's face in earnest. But certainly we had not a dream of your appropinquity. I instantly prepared an Epithalamium, in the form of a Sonata—which I was sending to Novello to compose; but Mary forbid it me as too light for the occasion—as if the subject required anything heavy: so in a tiff with her I sent no congratulation at all. Tho' I promise you the wedding was very pleasant news to me indeed. Let your reply name a day this next week, when you will come as many as a coach will hold; such a day as we had at Dulwich. My very kindest love and Mary's to Victoria and the Novellos. The enclosed is from a friend nameless, but highish in office, and a man whose accuracy of statement may be relied on with implicit confidence. He wants the *exposé* to appear in a newspaper as the "greatest piece of legal and Parliamentary villainy he ever remember'd," and he had experience of both; and thinks it would answer afterwards in a cheap pamphlet printed at Lambeth in 8vo sheet, as 16,000 families in that parish are interested. I know not whether the present "Examiner" keeps up the

character of exposing abuses, for I scarce see a paper now. If so, you may ascertain Mr. Hunt of the strictest truth of the statement, at the peril of my head. But if this won't do, transmit it me back, I beg, per coach—or better, bring it with you.

Yours unaltered, C. LAMB.

LETTER CCCLV

TO VINCENT NOVELLO

[*Enfield, November 6, 1828.*]

MY DEAR NOVELLO—I am afraid I shall appear rather tardy in offering my congratulations, however sincere, upon your daughter's marriage. The truth is I had put together a little Serenata upon the occasion, but was prevented from sending it by my sister, to whose judgment I am apt to defer too much in these kind of things; so that, now I have her consent, the offering, I am afraid, will have lost the grace of seasonableness. Such as it is, I send it. She thinks it a little too old-fashioned in the manner, too much like what they wrote a century back. But I cannot write in the modern style, if I try ever so hard. I have attended to the proper divisions for the music, and you will have little difficulty in composing it. If I may advise, make Pepusch your model, or Blow. It will be necessary to have a good second voice, as the stress of the melody lies there:—

SERENATA, FOR TWO VOICES,

On the Marriage of Charles Cowden Clarke, Esqre., to Victoria, eldest daughter of Vincent Novello, Esqre.

Duetto

Wake th' harmonious voice and string,
Love and Hymen's triumph sing,
Sounds with secret charms combining,
In melodious union joining,
Best the wondrous joys can tell,
That in hearts united dwell.

Recitative

First Voice

To young Victoria's happy fame
 Well may the Arts a trophy raise,
 Music grows sweeter in her praise,
And, own'd by her, with rapture speaks her name.
To touch the brave Cowdenio's heart,
 The Graces all in her conspire;
Love arms her with his surest dart,
 Apollo with his lyre.

Air

The list'ning Muses all around her,
 Think 't is Phœbus' strain they hear;
And Cupid, drawing near to wound her,
 Drops his bow, and stands to hear.

Recitative

Second Voice

While crowds of rivals with despair
Silent admire, or vainly court the Fair,

TO NOVELLO

Behold the happy conquest of her eyes,
A Hero is the glorious prize!
In courts, in camps, thro' distant realms renown'd,
Cowdenio comes!—Victoria, see,
He comes with British honour crown'd.
Love leads his eager steps to thee.

Air

In tender sighs he silence breaks,
The Fair his flame approves,
Consenting blushes warm her cheeks,
She smiles, she yields, she loves.

Recitative

First Voice

Now Hymen at the altar stands,
And while he joins their faithful hands,
Behold! by ardent vows brought down,
Immortal Concord, heavenly bright,
Array'd in robes of purest light,
Descends, th' auspicious rites to crown.
Her golden harp the goddess brings;
Its magic sound
Commands a sudden silence all around,
And strains prophetic thus attune the strings.

Duetto

First Voice

The Swain his Nymph possessing,

Second Voice

The Nymph her Swain caressing,

First and Second

Shall still improve the blessing,
For ever kind and true.

Both

While rolling years are flying,
Love, Hymen's lamp supplying,
With fuel never dying,
Shall still the flame renew.

To so great a master as yourself I have no need to suggest that the peculiar tone of the composition requires sprightliness, occasionally checked by tenderness, as in the second air,—

She smiles,—she yields,—she loves.

Again, you need not be told that each fifth line of the two first recitatives requires a crescendo.

And your exquisite taste will prevent your falling into the error of Purcell, who at a passage similar to *that* in my first air,

Drops his bow, and stands to hear,

directed the first violin thus:—

Here the first violin must drop his *bow*.

But, besides the absurdity of disarming his principal performer of so necessary an adjunct to his instrument, in such an emphatic part of the composition too, which must have had a droll effect at the time, all such minutiæ of adaptation are at this

time of day very properly exploded, and Jackson of Exeter very fairly ranks them under the head of puns.

Should you succeed in the setting of it, we propose having it performed (we have one very tolerable second voice here, and Mr. Holmes, I dare say, would supply the minor parts) at the Greyhound. But it must be a secret to the young couple till we can get the band in readiness.

Believe me, dear Novello, yours truly,

C. LAMB.

LETTER CCCLVI

TO LAMAN BLANCHARD

Enfield, November 9, 1828.

SIR—I beg to return my acknowledgments for the present of your elegant volume, which I should have esteemed, without the bribe of the name prefixed to it. I have been much pleased with it throughout, but am most taken with the peculiar delicacy of some of the sonnets. I shall put them up among my poetical treasures.

Your obliged Servant, C. LAMB.

LETTER CCCLVII

TO BERNARD BARTON

December 5, 1828.

DEAR B. B.—I am ashamed to receive so many nice books from you, and to have none to send you in return. You are always sending me some fruits or wholesome potherbs, and mine is the garden of the Sluggard, nothing but weeds, or scarce they. Nevertheless, if I knew how to transmit it, I would send you Blackwood's of this month, which contains a little drama, to have your opinion of it, and how far I have improved, or otherwise, upon its prototype. Thank you for your kind sonnet. It does me good to see the Dedication to a Christian Bishop. I am for a comprehension, as divines call it; but so as that the Church shall go a good deal more than half way over to the silent Meeting-house. I have ever said that the Quakers are the only *professors* of Christianity as I read it in the Evangiles. I say *professors:* marry, as to practice, with their gaudy hot types and poetical vanities, they are much at one with the sinful. Martin's Frontispiece is a very fine thing, let *C. L.* say what he pleases to the contrary. Of the Poems, I like them as a volume, better than any one of the preceding; particularly, "Power and Gentleness"—"The Present"—"Lady Russell"; with the exception that I do not like the noble act of Curtius, true or false—one of the grand foundations of old Roman patriotism—to be sac-

rificed to Lady R.'s taking notes on her husband's trial. If a thing is good, why invidiously bring it into light with something better? There are too few heroic things in this world, to admit of our marshalling them in anxious etiquettes of precedence. Would you make a poem on the story of Ruth (pretty story!), and then say—Ay, but how much better is the story of Joseph and his brethren! To go on, the stanzas to "Chalon" want the *name* of Clarkson in the body of them; it is left to inference. The "Battle of Gibeon" is spirited, again; but you sacrifice it in the last stanza to the song at Bethlehem. Is it quite orthodox to do so? The first was good, you suppose, for that dispensation. Why set the Word against the Word? It puzzles a weak Christian. So Watts's Psalms are an implied censure on David's. But as long as the Bible is supposed to be an equally divine emanation with the Testament, so long it will stagger weaklings to have them set in opposition. "Godiva" is delicately touched. I have always thought it a beautiful story, characteristic of the old English times. But I could not help amusing myself with the thought—if Martin had chosen this subject for a frontispiece—there would have been in some dark corner a white lady, white as the walker on the waves, riding upon some mystical quadruped; and high above would have risen "tower above tower a massy structure high"—the Tenterden steeples of Coventry, till the poor cross would scarce have known itself among the clouds; and far

above them all the distant Clint Hills peering over chimney-pots, piled up, Ossa-on-Olympus fashion, till the admiring spectator (admirer of a noble deed) might have gone look for the lady, as you must hunt for the other in the lobster. But M[artin] should be made royal architect. What palaces he would pile! But then, what parliamentary grants to make them good! Nevertheless, I like the frontispiece. "The Elephant" is pleasant; and I am glad you are getting into a wider scope of subjects. There may be too much, not religion, but too many *good words* in a book, till it becomes, as Sh—— says of Religion, a rhapsody of words. I will just name, that you have brought in the "Song to the Shepherds" in four or five, if not six places. Now this is not good economy. The "Enoch" is fine; and here I can sacrifice "Elijah" to it, because 't is illustrative only, and not disparaging of the latter prophet's departure. I like this best in the book. Lastly, I much like the "Heron"; 't is exquisite. Know you Lord Thurlow's Sonnet to a bird of that sort on Lacken water? If not, 't is indispensable I send it you, with my Blackwood, if you tell me how best to send them. "Fludyer" is pleasant,—you are getting gay and Hoodish. What is the enigma? Money? If not, I fairly confess I am foiled, and sphynx must . . . *eat me.* Four times I 've tried to write "eat me," and the blotting pen turns it into *cat me.* And now I will take my leave with saying, I esteem thy verses, like

thy present, honour thy frontispiecer, and right reverence thy patron and dedicatee, and am, dear B. B.,

Yours heartily, C. LAMB.

Our joint kindest loves to A. K. and your daughter.

LETTER CCCLVIII

TO LOUISA HOLCROFT

December 5, 1828.

DEAR MISS H.—Mary, who never writes, bids me thank you for the handkerchief. I do not understand such work, but if I apprehend her rightly, she would have preferred blonde to white sarcenet for the trimming; but she did not wish me to tell you so. I only hint it for the next. We are sorry for the mess of illness you are involved in. Are you stout enough to be the general nurse? Who told you we should not be glad to see you on Sundays and all? Tho' we devote that day to its proper duties, as you know, yet you are come of a religious stock, and to you it is not irksome to join in our simple forms, where the heart is all. Your little protégée is well, and as yet honest, but she has no one to give her caps now.

Thus far I had written last night. You will see by my altered scrawl that I am not so well this morning. I got up with a fevered skin, and spots are come out all over me. Pray God it is not the measles.

You did not let any of the children touch the seal with their little measly hands, did you? You should be careful when contagion is in the house. Pray God, your letter may not have conveyed the disorder. Our poor Postman looks flushed since. What a thing it would be to introduce a disease into a whole village! Yet so simple a thing as a letter has been known to convey a malady. I look at your note. I see it is wafered, not sealed. That makes it more likely. Wafers are flour, and I 've known a serious illness to be communicated in a piece of plumb cake. I never had the measles. How my head throbs! You cannot be too cautious, dear Louisa, what you do under such circum——

I am a little better than when I broke off at the last word. Your good sense will point out to you that the deficient syllables should be "stances." Circumstances. If I am incoherent, impute it to alarm. I will walk in the air——

I am not much refreshed. The air seemed hot and muggy. Somehow I feel quite irritable—there is no word in English—à la variole—we have no phrase to answer it—smallpoxical comes the nearest. Maybe 't was worse than the measles what Charles has. I will send for Mr. Asbury.

I have seen the apothecary. He pronounces my complaint to be, as I feared, of the variola kind, but gives me hopes I shall not be much marked. I hope we shall get well together. But at my time of life it is attended with more hazards. Whatever becomes of

me, I shall leave the world without a harsh thought of you. It was only a girlish imprudence. I am quite faint. Two pimples more come out within this last minute. Mary is crying. She looks red. So does Becky. I must go to bed.

Yours in constant Pain, C. L.

You will see by my Will, if it comes to that—I bear you no ill w——. Oh!

Miss Holcroft,
Mr. Kenny's,
12 Brunswick Square.

LETTER CCCLIX

TO C. COWDEN CLARKE

[*December 1828.*]

MY DEAR THREE C.'s—The way from Southgate to Colney Hatch thro' the unfrequentedest Blackberry paths that ever concealed their coy bunches from a truant Citizen, we have accidentally fallen upon—the giant Tree by Cheshunt we have missed, but keep your chart to go by, unless you will be our conduct. At present I am disabled from further flights than just to skirt round Clay Hill, with a peep at the fine backwoods, by strained tendons, got by skipping a skipping rope at 53—*hei mihi non sum qualis;* but do you know, now you come to talk of walks, a ramble of four hours or so—there and back—to the willow and lavender plantations at

the south corner of Northaw Church by a well dedicated to Saint Claridge, with the clumps of finest moss rising hillock fashion, which I counted to the number of two hundred and sixty, and are called "Claridge's covers," the tradition being that that saint entertained so many angels or hermits there, upon occasion of blessing the waters? The legends have set down the fruits spread upon that occasion, and in the "Black Book of St. Albans," some are named which are not supposed to have been introduced into this island until a century later. But waiving the miracle, a sweeter spot is not in ten counties round; you are knee-deep in clover, that is to say, if you are not above a middling man's height; from this paradise, making a day of it, you go to see the ruins of an old convent at March Hall, where some of the painted glass is yet whole and fresh.

If you do not know this, you do not know the capabilities of this country; you may be said to be a stranger to Enfield. I found it out one morning in October, and so delighted was I that I did not get home before dark, well a-paid.

I shall long to show you the Clump Meadows, as they are called—we might do that without reaching March Hall; when the days are longer we might take both, and come home by Forest Cross, so skirt over Pennington and the cheerful little village of Churchley to Forty Hill.

But these are dreams till summer; meanwhile we should be most glad to see you for a lesser excur-

sion—say Sunday next, you and *another*, or if more, best on a week-day with a notice, but o' Sundays, as far as a leg of mutton goes, most welcome.

We can squeeze out a bed. Edmonton coaches run every hour, and my pen has run out its quarter. Heartily farewell.

LETTER CCCLX

TO B. W. PROCTER

January 19, 1829.

MY DEAR PROCTER—I am ashamed not to have taken the drift of your pleasant letter, which I find to have been pure invention; but jokes are not suspected in Bœotian Enfield. We are plain people, and our talk is of corn and cattle and Waltham markets. Besides, I was a little out of sorts when I received it. The fact is, I am involved in a case which has fretted me to death, and I have no reliance except on you to extricate me. I am sure you will give me your best legal advice, having no professional friend besides but Robinson and Talfourd, with neither of whom, at present, I am on the best of terms. My brother's widow left a will, made during the lifetime of my brother, in which I am named sole executor, by which she bequeaths forty acres of arable property, which it seems she held under covert baron, unknown to my brother, to the heirs of the body of Elizabeth Dowden, her married daughter by a first husband, in fee simple, recoverable by fine;

invested property, mind, for there is the difficulty; subject to leet and quit-rent; in short, worded in the most guarded terms, to shut out the property from Isaac Dowden, the husband. Intelligence has just come of the death of this person in India, where he made a will, entailing this property (which seemed entangled enough already) to the heirs of his body that should not be born of his wife; for it seems by the law in India, natural children can recover. They have put the cause into Exchequer process here, removed by *certiorari* from the native courts; and the question is, whether I should, as executor, try the cause here, or again re-remove it to the Supreme Sessions at Bangalore, which I understand I can, or plead a hearing before the Privy Council here. As it involves all the little property of Elizabeth Dowden, I am anxious to take the fittest steps, and what may be least expensive. For God's sake assist me, for the case is so embarrassed that it deprives me of sleep and appetite. M. Burney thinks there is a case like it in chap. 170, sec. 5, in "Fearn's Contingent Remainders." Pray read it over with him dispassionately, and let me have the result. The complexity lies in the questionable power of the husband to alienate *in usum* enfeoffments whereof he was only collaterally seized, etc.

I had another favour to beg, which is the beggarliest of beggings: a few lines of verse for a young friend's album (six will be enough). M. Burney will tell you who she is I want 'em for. A girl of gold.

TO PROCTER

Six lines—make 'em eight—signed Barry C——. They need not be very good, as I chiefly want 'em as a foil to mine. But I shall be seriously obliged by any refuse scrap. We are in the last ages of the world, when St. Paul prophesied that women should be "headstrong, lovers of their own wills, having albums." I fled hither to escape the albumean persecution, and had not been in my new house twenty-four hours when the daughter of the next house came in with a friend's album to beg a contribution, and the following day intimated she had one of her own. Two more have sprung up since. "If I take the wings of the morning" and fly unto the uttermost parts of the earth, there will albums be. New Holland has albums. But the age is to be complied with. M. B. will tell you the sort of girl I request the ten lines for. Somewhat of a pensive cast, what you admire. The lines may come before the law question, as that cannot be determined before Hilary Term, and I wish your deliberate judgment on that. The other may be flimsy and superficial. And if you have not burnt your returned letter, pray resend it me, as a monumental token of my stupidity. 'Twas a little unthinking of you to touch upon a sore subject. Why, by dabbling in those accursed Annuals I have become a byword of infamy all over the kingdom. I have sicken'd decent women for asking me to write in albums. There be dark "jests" abroad, Master Cornwall, and some riddles may live to be cleared up. And 't is n't every saddle is put on the right steed.

And forgeries and false Gospels are not peculiar to the age following the Apostles. And some tubs don't stand on their right bottom, which is all I wish to say in these ticklish times; and so your servant,

CH. LAMB.

LETTER CCCLXI

January 22, 1829.

DON'T trouble yourself about the verses. Take 'em coolly as they come. Any day between this and Midsummer will do. Ten lines the extreme. There is no mystery in my incognita. She has often seen you, though you may not have observed a silent brown girl, who for the last twelve years has rambled about our house in her Christmas holidays. She is Italian by name and extraction. Ten lines about the blue sky of her country will do, as 't is her foible to be proud of it.—Item: I have made her a tolerable Latinist. She is called Emma Isola. I approve heartily of your turning your four vols. into a lesser compass. 'T will Sybillise the gold left. I shall, I think, be in town in a few weeks, when I will assuredly see you. I will put in here Loves to Mrs. Procter and the anti-Capulets, because Mary tells me I omitted them in my last. I like to see my friends here. I have put my lawsuit into the hands of an Enfield practitioner, a plain man, who seems perfectly to understand it, and gives me hopes of a favourable result.

Rumour tells us that Miss Holcroft is married

Who is Badman, or Bed'em? Have I seen him at Montacute's? I hear he is a great chymist. I am sometimes chymical myself. A thought strikes me with horror. Pray heaven he may not have done it for the sake of trying chymical experiments upon her,—young female subjects are so scarce. Louisa would make a capital shot. Are n't you glad about Burke's case? We may set off the Scotch murders against the Scotch novels: Hare, the Great Unhanged!

M. B. is richly worth your knowing. He is on the top scale of my friendship ladder, on which an angel or two is still climbing, and some, alas! descending. I am out of the literary world at present. Pray, is there anything new from the admired pen of the author of the *Pleasures of Hope?* Has Mrs. He-mans (double masculine) done anything pretty lately? Why sleeps the lyre of Hervey, and of Alaric Watts? Is the muse of L. E. L. silent? Did you see a sonnet of mine in Blackwood's last? Curious construction! Elaborata facilitas! And now I'll tell. 'T was written for the *Gem*, but the editors declined it, on the plea that it would *shock all mothers;* so they published the "Widow," instead. I am born out of time. I have no conjecture about what the present world calls delicacy. I thought *Rosamund Gray* was a pretty modest thing. Hessey assures me that the world would not bear it. I have lived to grow into an indecent character. When my sonnet was rejected, I exclaimed, "Damn the age! I will write for Antiquity."

Erratum in Sonnet:—Last line but something, for "tender," read *tend.* The Scotch do not know our law terms; but I find some remains of honest, plain, old writing lurking there still. They were not so mealy-mouthed to refuse my verses. Maybe 't is their oatmeal.

Blackwood sent me £20 for the drama. Somebody cheated me out of it next day; and my new pair of breeches, just sent home, cracking at first putting on, I exclaimed, in my wrath, "All tailors are cheats, and all men are tailors." Then I was better.

C. L.

LETTER CCCLXII

January 29, 1829.

WHEN Miss Ouldcroft (who is now Mrs. Beddome, and Bed—dom'd to her) was at Enfield, which she was in Summer time, and owed her health to its suns and genial influences, she visited (with young ladylike impertinence) a poor man's cottage that had a pretty baby (O the yearnling!) gave it fine caps and sweetmeats. On a day, broke into the parlour our two maids uproarious. "O ma'am, who do you think Miss Ouldcroft (they pronounce it Holcroft) has been working a cap for?" "A child," answered Mary, in true Shandean female simplicity. "'T is the man's child as was taken up for sheep-stealing." Miss Ouldcroft was staggered, and would have cut the connexion, but by main force I made her

go and take her leave of her protégée. I thought, if she went no more, the Abactor or the Abactor's wife (vide Ainsworth) would suppose she had heard something, and I have delicacy for a sheep-stealer. The overseers actually overhauled a mutton pie at the Baker's (his first, last, and only hope of mutton pie), which he never came to eat, and thence inferred his guilt. Per occasionem cujus, I framed the sonnet; observe its elaborate construction. I was four days about it.

THE GYPSY'S MALISON

"Suck, baby, suck! mother's love grows by giving,
Drain the sweet founts that only thrive by wasting;
Black manhood comes, when riotous guilty living
Hands thee the cup that shall be death in tasting.
Kiss, baby, kiss! Mother's lips shine by kisses,
Choke the warm breath that else would fall in blessings;
Black Manhood comes, when turbulent guilty blisses
Tend thee the kiss that poisons 'mid caressings.
Hang, baby, hang! mother's love loves such forces,
Strain the fond neck that bends still to thy clinging;
Black manhood comes, when violent lawless courses
Leave thee a spectacle in rude air swinging."
So sang a wither'd Sybil energetical,
And bann'd the ungiving door with lips prophetical.

Barry, study that sonnet. It is curiously and perversely elaborate. 'T is a choking subject, and therefore the reader is directed to the structure of it. See you? and was this a fourteener to be rejected by a trumpery annual? Forsooth, 't would shock all mothers; and may all mothers, who would so be

shocked, bed-domd! as if mothers were such sort of logicians as to infer the future hanging of *their* child from the theoretical hangibility (or capacity of being hanged, if the judge pleases) of every infant born with a neck on. Oh B. C.! my whole heart is faint, and my whole head is sick (how is it?) at this damn'd canting unmasculine age!

LETTER CCCLXIII

[*1829.*]

THE comings in of an incipient conveyancer are not adequate to the receipt of three twopenny post nonpaids in a week. Therefore, after this, I condemn my stub to long and deep silence, or shall awaken it to write to Lords. Lest those raptures in this honeymoon of my correspondence, which you avow for the gentle person of my Nuncio, after passing through certain natural grades, as Love, Love and Water, Love with the chill off, then subsiding to that point which the Heroic Suitor of his wedded dame, the noble-spirited Lord Randolph in the Play, declares to be the ambition of his passion, a reciprocation of "complacent kindness,"—should suddenly plump down (scarce staying to bait at the mid point of indifference, so hungry it is for distaste) to a loathing and blank aversion, to the rendering probable such counter expressions as this,—"Damn that infernal twopenny postman" (words which make the not yet glutted inamorato "lift up his hands and

wonder who can use them"). While, then, you are not ruined, let me assure thee, O thou above the Painter, and next only under Giraldus Cambrensis, the most immortal and worthy to be immortal Barry, thy most ingenious and golden cadences do take my fancy mightily. They are at this identical moment under the snip and the paste of the fairest hands (bating chilblains) in Cambridge, soon to be transplanted to Suffolk, to the envy of half of the young ladies in Bury. But tell me, and tell me truly, gentle Swain, is that Isola Bella a true spot in geographical denomination, or a floating Delos in thy brain? Lurks that fair island in verity in the bosom of Lake Maggiore, or some other with less poetic name, which thou hast Cornwallised for the occasion? And what if Maggiore itself be but a coinage of adaptation? Of this, pray resolve me immediately, for my Albumess will be catechised on this subject; and how can I prompt her? Lake Leman, I know, and Lemon Lake (in a Punch Bowl) I have swum in, though those Lymphs be long since dry. But Maggiore may be in the moon. Unsphinx this riddle for me, for my shelves have no Gazetteer. And mayest thou never murder thy father-in-law in the Trivia of Lincoln's Inn New Square Passage, nor afterwards make absurd proposals to the Widow M[ontagu]. But I know you abhor any such notions. Nevertheless so did O-Edipus (as Admiral Burney used to call him, splitting the diphthong in spite or ignorance) for that matter.

C. L.

LETTER CCCLXIV

February 2, 1829.

FACUNDISSIME POETA! quanquam istiusmodi epitheta oratoribus potiùs quam poetis attinere facilè scio—tamen, facundissime!

Commoratur nobiscum jamdiu, in agro Enfeldiense, scilicet, leguleius futurus, illustrissimus Martinus Burneius otium agens, negotia nominalia, et officinam clientum vacuam, paululum fugiens. Orat, implorat te—nempe, Martinus—ut si (quôd Dii faciant) fortè fortunâ, absente ipso, advenerit tardus cliens, eum certiorem feceris per literas hûc missas. Intelligisne? an me Anglicè et barbarice ad te hominem perdoctum scribere oportet? C. Agnus.

Si status de franco tenemento datur avo, et in eodem facto si mediate vel immediate datur *hæredibus vel hæredibus corporis dicti avi*, postrema hæc verba sunt Limitationis non Perquisitionis.

Dixi. CARLAGNULUS.

LETTER CCCLXV

TO COWDEN CLARKE

Edmonton, February 2, 1829.

DEAR COWDEN—Your books are as the gushing of streams in a desert. By the way, you have sent no autobiographies. Your letter seems to imply you had. Nor do I want any. Cowden, they

are of the books which I give away. What damn'd Unitarian skewer-soul'd things the general biographies turn out! "Rank and Talent" you shall have when Mrs. May has done with 'em. Mary likes Mrs. Bedinfield much. For me, I read nothing but *Astrea* —it has turn'd my brain—I go about with a switch turn'd up at the end for a crook; and Lambs being too old, the butcher tells me, my cat follows me in a green ribband. Becky and her cousin are getting pastoral dresses, and then we shall all four go about Arcadising. O cruel Shepherdess! Inconstant, yet fair, and more inconstant for being fair! Her gold ringlets fell in a disorder superior to order! Come and join us.

I am called the Black Shepherd—you shall be Cowden with the Tuft.

Prosaically, we shall be glad to have you both—or any two of you—drop in by surprise some Saturday night.

This must go off.

Loves to Vittoria. C. L.

LETTER CCCLXVI

TO H. C. ROBINSON

Enfield, February 27, 1829.

DEAR R.—Expectation was alert on the receipt of your strange-shaped present, while yet undisclosed from its fusc envelope. Some said, 't is a

viol da Gamba, others pronounced it a fiddle; I, myself, hoped it a liqueur case, pregnant with *eau-de-vie* and such odd nectar. When midwifed into daylight, the gossips were at a loss to pronounce upon its species. Most took it for a marrow spoon, an apple scoop, a banker's guinea shovel; at length its true scope appeared, its drift, to save the back-bone of my sister stooping to scuttles: a philanthropic intent; borrowed, no doubt, from some of the Colliers. You save people's backs one way, and break 'em again by loads of obligation. The spectacles are delicate and Vulcanian. No lighter texture than their steel did the cuckoldy blacksmith frame to catch Mrs. Vulcan and the Captain in. For ungalled forehead, as for back unbursten, you have Mary's thanks. Marry, for my own peculium of obligation, 't was supererogatory. A second part of Pamela was enough in conscience. Two Pamelas in a house are too much, without two Mr. B.'s to reward 'em.

Mary, who is handselling her new aerial perspectives upon a pair of old worsted stockings trod out in Cheshunt lanes, sends her love: I, great goodliking. Bid us a personal farewell before you see the Vatican.

CHARLES LAMB.

LETTER CCCLXVII

TO BERNARD BARTON

March 25, 1829.

DEAR B. B.—I send you by desire Darley's very poetical poem. You will like, I think, the novel headings of each scene. Scenical directions in verse are novelties. With it I send a few *duplicates*, which are *therefore* of no value to me; and may amuse an idle hour. Read "Christmas": 't is the production of a young author, who reads all your writings. A good word from you about his little book would be as balm to him. It has no pretensions, and makes none. But parts are pretty. In Field's Appendix turn to a poem called the Kangaroo. It is in the best way of our old poets, if I mistake not. I have just come from town, where I have been to get my bit of quarterly pension; and have brought home, from stalls in Barbican, the old "Pilgrim's Progress" with the prints—Vanity Fair, etc.—now scarce. Four shillings. Cheap. And also one of whom I have oft heard and had dreams, but never saw in the flesh—that is in sheepskin—"The whole Theologic Works of

THOMAS AQUINAS."

My arms ached with lugging it a mile to the stage; but the burden was a pleasure, such as old Anchises was to the shoulders of Æneas, or the Lady to the Lover in old romance, who having to carry her to the top of a high mountain (the price of obtaining

her), clambered with her to the top, and fell dead with fatigue.

"Oh the glorious old Schoolmen!"

There must be something in him. Such great names imply greatness. Who hath seen Michael Angelo's things—of us that never pilgrimaged to Rome—and yet which of us disbelieves his greatness? How I will revel in his cobwebs and subtleties, till my brain spins!

N.B. I have writ in the old Hamlet: offer it to Mitford in my name, if he have not seen it. 'T is woefully below our editions of it. But keep it, if you like. (What is M. to me?)

I do not mean this to go for a letter, only to apprise you that the parcel is booked for you this 25th March, 1829, from the Four Swans, Bishopsgate. With both our loves to Lucy and A. K. Yours ever,

C. L.

LETTER CCCLXVIII

TO H. C. ROBINSON

April 10, 1829.

DEAR ROBINSON—We are afraid you will slip from us from England without again seeing us. It would be charity to come and see me. I have these three days been laid up with strong rheumatic pains, in loins, back, shoulders. I shriek sometimes from the violence of them. I get scarce any sleep, and the consequence is, I am restless, and want to

change sides as I lie, and I cannot turn without resting on my hands, and so turning all my body all at once, like a log with a lever. While this rainy weather lasts, I have no hope of alleviation. I have tried flannels and embrocation in vain. Just at the hip joint the pangs sometimes are so excruciating, that I cry out. It is as violent as the cramp, and far more continuous. I am ashamed to whine about these complaints to you, who can ill enter into them; but indeed they are sharp. You go about, in rain or fine, at all hours, without discommodity. I envy you your immunity at a time of life not much removed from my own. But you owe your exemption to temperance, which it is too late for me to pursue. I, in my lifetime, have had my good things. Hence my frame is brittle—yours strong as brass. I never knew any ailment you had. You can go out at night in all weathers, sit up all hours. Well, I don't want to moralise; I only wish to say that if you are inclined to a game at double-dumby, I would try and bolster myself in a chair for a rubber or so. My days are tedious, but less so, and less painful than my nights. May you never know the pain and difficulty I have in writing so much! Mary, who is most kind, joins in the wish.

C. Lamb.

LETTER CCCLXIX

April 17, 1829.

I DO confess to mischief. It was the subtlest diabolical piece of malice heart of man has contrived. I have no more rheumatism than that poker. Never was freer from all pains and aches. Every joint sound, to the tip of the ear from the extremity of the lesser toe. The report of thy torments was blown circuitously here from Bury. I could not resist the jeer. I conceived you writhing when you should just receive my congratulations. How mad you 'd be! Well, it is not in my method to inflict pangs. I leave that to Heaven: but in the existing pangs of a friend I have a share. His disquietude crowns my exemption. I imagine you howling, and pace across the room, shooting out my free arms, legs, etc., this way and that way, with an assurance of not kindling a spark of pain from them. I deny that Nature meant us to sympathise with agonies. Those face-contortions, retortions, distortions have the merriness of antics. Nature meant them for farce—not so pleasant to the actor, indeed; but Grimaldi cries when we laugh, and 't is but one that suffers to make thousands rejoice.

You say that shampooing is ineffectual; but, *per se*, it is good, to show the introvolutions, extravolutions, of which the animal frame is capable—to show what the creature is receptible of, short of dissolution.

You are worst of nights, an't you? You never was rack'd, was you? I should like an authentic map of those feelings.

You seem to have the flying gout. You can scarcely screw a smile out of your face, can you? I sit at immunity and sneer *ad libitum*. 'T is now the time for you to make good resolutions. I may go on breaking 'em for anything the worse I find myself. Your doctor seems to keep you on the long cure. Precipitate healings are never good. Don't come while you are so bad; I shan't be able to attend to your throes and the dumby at once. I should like to know how slowly the pain goes off. But don't write, unless the motion will be likely to make your sensibility more exquisite.

Your affectionate and truly healthy friend,

C. Lamb.

Mary thought a letter from me might amuse you in your torment.

LETTER CCCLXX

TO GEORGE DYER

Enfield, April 29, 1829.

Dear Dyer—As well as a bad pen can do it, I must thank you for your friendly attention to the wishes of our young friend Emma, who was packing up for Bury when your sonnet arrived, and was too hurried to express her sense of its merits.

I know she will treasure up that and your second communication among her choicest rarities, as from her *grandfather's* friend, whom not having seen, she loves to hear talked of. The second letter shall be sent after her, with our first parcel to Suffolk, where she is, to us, alas dead and Bury'd; we sorely miss her. Should you at any hour think of four or six lines, to send her, addressed to herself simply, naming her grandsire, and to wish she may pass through life as much respected, with your own G. Dyer at the end, she would feel rich indeed, for the nature of an Album asks for verses that have not been in print before; but this quite at your convenience: and to be less trouble to yourself, four lines would be sufficient. Enfield has come out in summer beauty. Come when you will and we will give you a bed. Emma has left hers, you know. I remain, my dear Dyer, your affectionate friend,

CHARLES LAMB.

LETTER CCCLXXI

TO WALTER WILSON

May 28, 1829.

DEAR W.—Introduce this, or omit it, as you like. I think I wrote better about it in a letter to you from India H. If you have that, perhaps out of the two I could patch up a better thing, if you 'd return both. But I am very poorly, and have been harassed with an illness of my sister's.

TO ALLSOP

The Ode was printed in the *New Times* nearly the end of 1825, and I have only omitted some silly lines, call it a corrected copy.

Yours ever, C. LAMB.

Put my name to either, or both, as you like.

Walter Wilson, Esq.,
Burnett House,
Near Bath, Somersetshire.

LETTER CCCLXXII

TO THOMAS ALLSOP

[Summer 1829.]

AT midsummer, or soon after (I will let you know the previous day), I will take a day with you in the purlieus of my old haunts. No offence has been taken, any more than meant. My house is full at present, but empty of its chief pride. She is dead to me for many months. But when I see you, then I will say, Come and see me. With undiminished friendship to you both.

Your faithful, but queer, C. L.

How you frighted me! Never write again, "Coleridge is dead," at the end of a line, and tamely come in with, "to his friends" at the beginning of another. Love is quicker, and fear from love, than the transition ocular from line to line.

LETTER CCCLXXIII

TO BERNARD BARTON

July 3, 1829.

DEAR B. B.—I am very much grieved indeed for the indisposition of poor Lucy. Your letter found me in domestic troubles. My sister is again taken ill, and I am obliged to remove her out of the house for many weeks, I fear, before I can hope to have her again. I have been very desolate indeed. My loneliness is a little abated by our young friend Emma having just come here for her holidays, and a schoolfellow of hers that was, with her. Still the house is not the same, though she is the same. Mary had been pleasing herself with the prospect of seeing her at this time; and with all their company, the house feels at times a frightful solitude. May you and I in no very long time have a more cheerful theme to write about, and congratulate upon a daughter's and a sister's perfect recovery. Do not be long without telling me how Lucy goes on. I have a right to call her by her quaker-name, you know. Emma knows that I am writing to you, and begs to be remembered to you with thankfulness for your ready contribution. Her album is filling apace. But of her contributors, one, almost the flower of it, a most amiable young man and late acquaintance of mine, has been carried off by consumption, on return from one of the Azores islands, to which he went with hopes of mastering the disease, came back improved, went

back to a most close and confined counting-house, and relapsed. His name was Dibdin, grandson of the songster.

To get out of home themes, have you seen Southey's Dialogues? His lake descriptions, and the account of his library at Keswick, are very fine. But he needed not have called up the ghost of More to hold the conversations with; which might as well have passed between A and B, or Caius and Lucius. It is making too free with a defunct Chancellor and Martyr.

I feel as if I had nothing farther to write about. O I forget the prettiest letter I ever read, that I have received from "Pleasures of Memory" Rogers, in acknowledgment of a sonnet I sent him on the loss of his brother.

It is too long to transcribe, but I hope to show it you some day, as I hope some time again to see you, when all of us are well. Only it ends thus: "We were nearly of an age; he was the elder. He was the only person in the world in whose eyes I always appeared young." I will now take my leave with assuring you that I am most interested in hoping to hear favourable accounts from you. With kindest regards to A. K. and you, yours truly, C. L.

LETTER CCCLXXIV

Enfield Chase Side, Saturday,
25th of July, A.D. 1829, 11 A.M.

THERE!—a fuller, plumper, juicier date never dropt from Idumean palm. Am I in the *date*-ive case now? If not, a fig for dates, which is more than a date is worth. I never stood much affected to these limitary specialities; least of all, since the date of my superannuation.

"What have I with time to do?
Slaves of desks, 't was meant for you."

DEAR B. B.—Your handwriting has conveyed much pleasure to me in report of Lucy's restoration. Would I could send you as good news of my poor Lucy. But some wearisome weeks I must remain lonely yet. I have had the loneliest time, near ten weeks, broken by a short apparition of Emma for her holidays, whose departure only deepened the returning solitude, and by ten days I have passed in town. But town, with all my native hankering after it, is not what it was. The streets, the shops are left; but all old friends are gone! And in London I was frightfully convinced of this as I passed houses and places, empty caskets now. I have ceased to care almost about anybody. The bodies I cared for are in graves, or dispersed. My old clubs, that lived so long and flourished so steadily, are crumbled away. When I took leave of our adopted young friend at Char-

ing Cross, 't was heavy unfeeling rain, and I had nowhere to go. Home have I none, and not a sympathising house to turn to in the great city. Never did the waters of heaven pour down on a forlorner head. Yet I tried ten days at a sort of friend's house, but it was large and straggling,—one of the individuals of my old long knot of friends, card-players, pleasant companions, that have tumbled to pieces, into dust and other things; and I got home on Thursday, convinced that I was better to get home to my hole at Enfield, and hide like a sick cat in my corner. Less than a month I hope will bring home Mary. She is at Fulham, looking better in her health than ever, but sadly rambling, and scarce showing any pleasure in seeing me, or curiosity when I should come again. But the old feelings will come back again, and we shall drown old sorrows over a game of picquet again. But 't is a tedious cut out of a life of 64, to lose 12 or 13 weeks every year or two. And to make me more alone, our ill-tempered maid is gone, who, with all her airs, was yet a home-piece of furniture, a record of better days. The young thing that has succeeded her is good and attentive, but she is nothing. And I have no one here to talk over old matters with. Scolding and quarrelling have something of familiarity, and a community of interest; they imply acquaintance; they are of resentment, which is of the family of dearness.

I can neither scold nor quarrel at this insignificant implement of household services: she is less than a

cat, and just better than a deal dresser. What I can do, and do over-do, is to walk; but deadly long are the days, these Summer all-day days, with but a half-hour's candle-light, and no fire-light. I do not write, tell your kind inquisitive Eliza, and can hardly read. In the ensuing *Blackwood* will be an old rejected farce of mine, which may be new to you, if you see that same medley. What things are all the magazines now! I contrive studiously not to see them. The popular *New Monthly* is perfect trash. Poor Hessey, I suppose you see, has failed; Hunt and Clarke too. Your "Vulgar Truths" will be a good name; and I think your prose must please—me at least. But 'tis useless to write poetry with no purchasers. 'Tis cold work authorship, without something to puff one into fashion. Could you not write something on Quakerism, for Quakers to read, but nominally addressed to Non-Quakers, explaining your dogmas—waiting on the Spirit—by the analogy of human calmness and patient waiting on the judgment? I scarcely know what I mean, but to make Non-Quakers reconciled to your doctrines, by showing something like them in mere human operations; but I hardly understand myself; so let it pass for nothing. I pity you for overwork; but I assure you, no work is worse. The mind preys on itself, the most unwholesome food. I bragged formerly that I could not have too much time. I have a surfeit. With few years to come, the days are wearisome. But weariness is not eternal. Something will shine out to take the load off that flags me,

which is at present intolerable. I have killed an hour or two in this poor scrawl. I am a sanguinary murderer of time, and would kill him inch-meal just now. But the snake is vital. Well: I shall write merrier anon. 'T is the present copy of my countenance I send, and to complain is a little to alleviate. May you enjoy yourself as far as the wicked wood will let you, and think that you are not quite alone as I am! Health to Lucia, and to Anna, and kind remembrances.

Your forlorn, C. L.

LETTER CCCLXXV

TO SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

Tuesday, 1829.

MY DEAR COLERIDGE—With pain and grief, I must entreat you to excuse us on Thursday. My head, though externally correct, has had a severe concussion in my long illness, and the very idea of an engagement hanging over for a day or two, forbids my rest, and I get up miserable. I am not well enough for company. I do assure you, no other thing prevents my coming. I expect Field and his brothers this or to-morrow evening, and it worries me to death that I am not ostensibly ill enough to put 'em off. I will get better, when I shall hope to see your nephew. He will come again. Mary joins in best love to the Gillmans. Do, I earnestly entreat

you, excuse me. I assure you, again, that I am not fit to go out yet.

Yours (though shattered), C. LAMB.

LETTER CCCLXXVI

TO C. A. ELTON

India House
(to which place all letters addressed to C. L. commonly come),
August 12, 1829.

MY DEAR SIR—You have overwhelmed me with your favours. I have received positively a little library from Baldwyn's. I do not know how I have deserved such a bounty.

We have been up to the ear in classics ever since it came. I have been greatly pleased, but most, I think, with the Hesiod,—the Titan battle quite amazed me. Gad, it was no child's play—and then the homely aphorisms at the end of the works—how adroitly you have turned them! Can he be the same Hesiod who did the Titans? the latter is—

"— wine
Which to madness does incline."

But to read the *Days and Weeks* is like eating nice brown bread, homely sweet and nutritive. Apollonius was new to me: I had confounded him with the conjuror of that name. Medea is glorious; but I must give up Dido. She positively is the only Fine Lady

of Antiquity: her courtesy to the Trojans is altogether queenlike. Eneas is a most disagreeable person: Ascanius a pretty young master. Mezentius for my money—his dying speech shames Turpin—not the Archbishop, but the roadster of that name, I mean.

I have been ashamed to find how many names of classics (and more than their names) you have introduced me to, that before I was ignorant of.

Your commendation of Master Chapman arrideth me. Can any one read the pert, modern, Frenchified notes, etc., in Pope's translation, and contrast them with solemn weighty prefaces of Chapman, writing in full faith, as he evidently does, of the plenary inspiration of his author—worshipping his meanest scraps and relics as divine—without one sceptical misgiving of their authenticity, and doubt which was the properest to expound Homer to his countrymen? Reverend Chapman! you have read his hymn to Pan (the Homeric)—why, it is Milton's blank verse clothed with rhyme! *Paradise Lost* could scarce lose, could it be so accoutred.

I shall die in the belief that he has improved upon Homer, in the *Odyssey* in particular—the disclosure of Ulysses of himself to Alcinous—his previous behaviour at the song of the stern strife arising between Achilles and himself (how it raises him above the *Iliad* Ulysses!)—but you know all these things quite as well as I do. But what a deaf ear old C. would have turned to the doubters in Homer's real per-

sonality! He apparently believed all the fables of Homer's birth, etc. etc.

Those notes of Bryant have caused the greatest disorder in my brain-pan. Well, I will not flatter when I say that we have had two or three long evenings' *good reading* out of your kind present.

I will say nothing of the tenderest parts in your own little volume, at the end of such slatternly scribble as this, but indeed they cost us some tears. I scrawl on because of interruptions every moment. You guess how it is in a busy office—papers thrust into your hand when your hand is busiest—and every anti-classical disavocation.

C. A. Elton, Esq.,
Clifton, Bristol.

LETTER CCCLXXVII

TO MR. SERJEANT TALFOURD

[*1829.*]

DEAR Talfourd—You could not have told me of a more friendly thing than you have been doing. I am proud of my namesake. I shall take care never to do any dirty action, pick pockets, or anyhow get myself hanged, for fear of reflecting ignominy upon your young Chrisom. I have now a motive to be good. I shall not *omnis moriar;*—my name borne down the black gulf of oblivion.

I shall survive in eleven letters, five more than Cæsar. Possibly I shall come to be knighted, or more! Sir C. L. Talfourd, Bart.!

Yet hath it an authorish twang with it, which will wear out my name for poetry. Give him a smile from me till I see him. If you do not drop down before, some day in the *week after next* I will come and take one night's lodging with you, if convenient, before you go hence. You shall name it. We are in town to-morrow *speciali gratiâ*, but by no arrangement can get up near you.

Believe us both, with greatest regards, yours and Mrs. Talfourd's

CHARLES LAMB-PHILO-TALFOURD.

I come as near it as I can.

LETTER CCCLXXVIII

TO MR. GILLMAN

Chase Side, Enfield,
October 26, 1829.

DEAR GILLMAN—Allsop brought me your kind message yesterday. How can I account for having not visited Highgate this long time? Change of place seemed to have changed me. How grieved I was to hear in what indifferent health Coleridge has been, and I not to know of it! A little school divinity, well applied, may be healing. I send him honest Tom of Aquin; that was always an obscure great idea to me: I never thought or dreamed to see him in the flesh, but t'other day I rescued him from a stall in Barbican and brought him off in triumph. He comes

to greet Coleridge's acceptance, for his shoe-latchets I am unworthy to unloose. Yet there are pretty pro's and con's, and such unsatisfactory learning in him. Commend me to the question of etiquette—"*utrum annunciatio debuerit fieri per angelum*"—*Quæst. 30, Articulus 2.* I protest, till now I had thought Gabriel a fellow of some mark and livelihood, not a simple esquire, as I find him. Well, do not break your lay brains, nor I neither, with these curious nothings. They are nuts to our dear friend, whom hoping to see at your first friendly hint that it will be convenient, I end with begging our very kindest loves to Mrs. Gillman. We have had a sorry house of it here. Our spirits have been reduced till we were at hope's end what to do. Obliged to quit this house, and afraid to engage another, till in extremity, I took the desperate resolve of kicking house and all down, like Bunyan's pack; and here we are in a new life at board and lodging with an honest couple, our neighbours. We have ridded ourselves of the cares of dirty acres; and the change, though of less than a week, has had the most beneficial effects on Mary already. She looks two years and a half younger for it. But we have had sore trials.

God send us one happy meeting!—Yours faithfully, C. Lamb.

TO NOVELLO—WILSON

LETTER CCCLXXIX

TO VINCENT NOVELLO

[*October 1829.*]

DEAR FUGUEIST,
or hear'st thou rather
Contrapuntist?—

We expect you four (as many as the table will hold without squeezing) at Mrs. Westwood's Table d'Hôte on Thursday. You will find the White House shut up, and us moved under the wing of the Phœnix, which gives us friendly refuge. Beds for guests, marry, we have none, but cleanly accomodings at the Crown and Horse-Shoe.

Yours harmonically, C. L.

Vincentio (what, ho!) Novello, a Squire,
66, Great Queen Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields.

LETTER CCCLXXX

TO WALTER WILSON

Enfield, November 15, 1829.

MY DEAR WILSON—I have not opened a packet of unknown contents for many years that gave me so much pleasure as when I disclosed your three volumes. I have given them a careful perusal, and they have taken their degree of classical books upon my shelves. De Foe was always my darling; but what darkness was I in as to far the larger part of

his writings! I have now an epitome of them all. I think the way in which you have done the "Life" the most judicious you could have pitched upon. You have made him tell his own story, and your comments are in keeping with the tale. Why, I never heard of such a work as the *Review*. Strange that in my stall-hunting days I never so much as lit upon an odd volume of it. This circumstance looks as if they were never of any great circulation. But I may have met with 'em, and not knowing the prize, overpast 'em. I was almost a stranger to the whole history of Dissenters in those reigns, and picked my way through that strange book the "Consolidator" at random. How affecting are some of his personal appeals! What a machine of projects he set on foot! and following writers have picked his pocket of the patents. I do not understand whereabouts in "Roxana" he himself left off. I always thought the complete-tourist-sort of description of the town she passes through on her last embarkation miserably unseasonable and out of place. I knew not they were spurious. Enlighten me as to where the apocryphal matter commences. I, by accident, can correct one A. D., "Family Instructor," vol. ii. 1718; you say his first volume had then reached the fourth edition; now I have a fifth, printed for Eman Matthews, 1717. So have I plucked one rotten date, or rather picked it up where it had inadvertently fallen, from your flourishing date tree, the Palm of Engaddi. I may take it for my pains. I think yours a book which

every public library must have, and every English scholar should have. I am sure it has enriched my meagre stock of the author's works. I seem to be twice as opulent. Mary is by my side, just finishing the second volume. It must have interest to divert her away so long from her modern novels. Colburn will be quite jealous. I was a little disappointed at my "Ode to the Treadmill" not finding a place, but it came out of time. The two papers of mine will puzzle the reader, being so akin. Odd, that never keeping a scrap of my own letters, with some fifteen years' interval I should nearly have said the same things. But I shall always feel happy in having my name go down anyhow with De Foe's, and that of his historiographer. I promise myself, if not immortality, yet diuternity of being read in consequence. We have both had much illness this year; and feeling infirmities and fretfulness grow upon us, we have cast off the cares of housekeeping, sold off our goods, and commenced boarding and lodging with a very comfortable old couple next door to where you found us. We use a sort of common table. Nevertheless, we have reserved a private one for an old friend; and when Mrs. Wilson and you revisit Babylon, we shall pray you to make it yours for a season. Our very kindest remembrances to you both.

From your old friend and *fellow-journalist*, now in *two instances*. C. Lamb.

Hazlitt is going to make your book a basis for a

review of De Foe's Novels in the "Edinbro'." I wish I had health and spirits to do it. Hone I have not seen, but I doubt not he will be much pleased with your performance. I very much hope you will give us an account of Dunton, etc. But what I should more like to see would be a Life and Times of Bunyan. Wishing health to you, and long life to your healthy book, again I subscribe me,

Yours in verity, C. L.

LETTER CCCLXXXI

TO MR. GILLMAN

November 30, 1829.

DEAR G.—The excursionists reached home, and the good town of Enfield, a little after four, without slip or dislocation. Little has transpired concerning the events of the back-journey, save that on passing the house of 'Squire Mellish, situate a stone-bow's cast from the hamlet, Father Westwood, with a good-natured wonderment, exclaimed, "I cannot think what is gone of Mr. Mellish's rooks. I fancy they have taken flight somewhere, but I have missed them two or three years past." All this while, according to his fellow-traveller's report, the rookery was darkening the air above with undiminished population, and deafening all ears but his with their cawings. But Nature has been gently withdrawing such phenomena from the notice of two of

Thomas Westwood's senses, from the time he began to miss the rooks. T. Westwood has passed a retired life in this hamlet, of thirty or forty years, living upon the minimum which is consistent with gentility, yet a star among the minor gentry, receiving the bows of the tradespeople, and courtesies of the alms-women, daily. Children venerate him not less for his external show of gentry, than they wonder at him for a gentle rising endorsation of the person, not amounting to a hump, or if a hump, innocuous as the hump of the buffalo, and coronative of as mild qualities. 'T is a throne on which patience seems to sit,—the proud perch of a self-respecting humility, stooping with condescension. Thereupon the cares of life have sate, and rid him easily. For he has thrid the *angustiæ domûs* with dexterity. Life opened upon him with comparative brilliancy. He set out as a rider or traveller for a wholesale house, in which capacity he tells of many hair-breadth escapes that befell him; one especially, how he rode a mad horse into the town of Devizes; how horse and rider arrived in a foam, to the utter consternation of the expostulating hostlers, inn-keepers, etc. It seems it was sultry weather, piping hot; the steed tormented into frenzy with gad-flies, long past being roadworthy; but safety and the interest of the house he rode for were incompatible things; a fall in serge cloth was expected, and a mad entrance they made of it. Whether the exploit was purely voluntary, or partially; or whether a certain personal defiguration

in the man part of this extraordinary centaur (non-assistive to partition of natures) might not enforce the conjunction, I stand not to inquire. I look not with 'skew eyes into the deeds of heroes. The hosier that was burnt with his shop, in Field Lane, on Tuesday night, shall have passed to heaven for me like a Marian Martyr, provided always that he consecrated the fortuitous incremation with a short ejaculation in the exit, as much as if he had taken his state degrees of martyrdom *in formâ* in the market vicinage. There is adoptive as well as acquisitive sacrifice. Be the animus what it might, the fact is indisputable, that this composition was seen flying all abroad, and mine host of Daintry may yet remember its passing through his town, if his scores are not more faithful than his memory. After this exploit (enough for one man), Thomas Westwood seems to have subsided into a less hazardous occupation: and in the twenty-fifth year of his age we find him a haberdasher in Bow Lane: yet still retentive of his early riding (though leaving it to rawer stomachs), and Christmasly at night sithence to this last, and shall to his latest Christmas, hath he, doth he, and shall he, tell after supper the story of the insane steed and the desperate rider. Save for Bedlam or Luke's no eye could have guessed that melting day what house he rid for. But he reposes on his bridles, and after the ups and downs (metaphoric only) of a life behind the counter—hard riding sometimes, I fear, for poor T. W.—with the scrapings to-

gether of the shop, and *one anecdote*, he hath finally settled at Enfield; by hard economising, gardening, building for himself, hath reared a mansion; married a daughter; qualified a son for a counting-house; gotten the respect of high and low; served for self or substitute the greater parish offices; hath a special voice at vestries; and, domiciliating us, hath reflected a portion of his house-keeping respectability upon your humble servants. We are greater, being his lodgers, than when we were substantial renters. His name is a passport to take off the sneers of the native Enfielders against obnoxious foreigners. We are endenizened. Thus much of T. Westwood have I thought fit to acquaint you, that you may see the exemplary reliance upon Providence with which I entrusted so dear a charge as my own sister to the guidance of a man that rode the mad horse into Devizes. To come from his heroic character, all the amiable qualities of domestic life concentre in this tamed Bellerophon. He is excellent over a glass of grog; just as pleasant without it; laughs when he hears a joke, and when (which is much oftener) he hears it not; sings glorious old sea-songs on festival nights; and but upon a slight acquaintance of two years, Coleridge, is as dear a deaf old man to us as old Norris (rest his soul!) was after fifty. To him and his scanty literature (what there is of it, *sound*) have we flown from the metropolis and its damn'd annualists, reviewers, authors, and the whole muddy ink press of that stagnant pool.

Now, Gillman again, you do not know the treasure of the Fullers. I calculate on having massy reading till Christmas. All I want here is books of the true sort, not those things in boards that moderns mistake for books, what they club for at book-clubs.

I did not mean to cheat you with a blank side, but my eye smarts, for which I am taking medicine, and abstain, this day at least, from any aliments but milk-porridge, the innocent taste of which I am anxious to renew after a half-century's disacquaintance. If a blot fall here like a tear, it is not pathos, but an angry eye.

Farewell, while my *specilla* are sound.

Yours and yours, C. LAMB.

LETTER CCCLXXXII

[*December*] *1829.*

PRAY trust me with the "Church History," as well as the "Worthies." A moon shall restore both. Also give me back "Him of Aquinum." In return you have the *light of my countenance.* Adieu.

P. S.—A sister also of mine comes with it. A son of Nimshi drives her. Their driving will have been furious, impassioned. Pray God they have not toppled over the tunnel! I promise you I fear their steed, bred out of the wind without father, semi-Melchisedecish, hot, phaetontic. From my country lodgings at Enfield. C. L.

LETTER CCCLXXXIII

[*December*] *1829.*

DEAR GILLMAN—Pray do you, or S. T. C., immediately write to say you have received back the golden works of the dear, fine, silly old angel, which I part from, bleeding, and to say how the Winter has used you all.

It is our intention soon, weather permitting, to come over for a day at Highgate; for beds we will trust to the Gate-House, should you be full; tell me if we may come casually, for in this change of climate there is no naming a day for walking. With best loves to Mrs. Gillman, etc.

Yours, mopish, but in health, C. LAMB.

I shall be uneasy till I hear of Fuller's safe arrival.

LETTER CCCLXXXIV

TO BERNARD BARTON

December 8, 1829.

MY DEAR B. B.—You are very good to have been uneasy about us, and I have the satisfaction to tell you that we are both in better health and spirits than we have been for a year or two past; I may say than we have been since we have been at Enfield. The cause may not appear quite adequate, when I tell you that a course of ill-health and spirits brought us to the determination of giving up

our house here, and we are boarding and lodging with a worthy old couple, long inhabitants of Enfield, where everything is done for us without our trouble, further than a reasonable weekly payment. We should have done so before, but it is not easy to flesh and blood to give up an ancient establishment, to discard old Penates, and from house keepers to turn house sharers. (*N. B.* We are not in the workhouse.) Diocletian, in his garden, found more repose than on the imperial seat of Rome; and the nob of Charles the Fifth ached seldomer under a monk's cowl than under the diadem. With such shadows of assimilation we countenance our degradation. With such a load of dignified cares just removed from our shoulders, we can the more understand and pity the accession to yours, by the advancement to an assigneeship. I will tell you honestly, B. B., that it has been long my deliberate judgment that all bankrupts, of whatsoever denomination, civil or religious, ought to be hanged. The pity of mankind has for ages run in a wrong channel, and has been diverted from poor creditors—(how many I have known sufferers! Hazlitt has just been defrauded of £100 by his bookseller-friends breaking)—to scoundrel debtors. I know all the topics—that distress may come upon an honest man without his fault; that the failure of one that he trusted was his calamity, etc. Then let *both* be hanged. O how careful it would make traders! These are my deliberate thoughts, after many years' experience in matters of trade. What a

world of trouble it would have saved you, if Friend * * * * had been immediately hanged, without benefit of clergy, which (being a Quaker I presume) he could not reasonably insist upon. Why, after slaving twelve months in your assign-business, you will be enabled to declare 7d. in the pound in all human probability. B. B., he should be *hanged.* Trade will never re-flourish in this land till such a law is established. I write big, not to save ink but eyes, mine having been troubled with reading through three folios of old Fuller in almost as few days, and I went to bed last night in agony, and am writing with a vial of eye-water before me, alternately dipping in vial and inkstand. This may inflame my zeal against bankrupts, but it was my speculation when I could see better. Half the world's misery (Eden else) is owing to want of money, and all that want is owing to bankrupts. I declare I would, if the state wanted practitioners, turn hangman myself, and should have great pleasure in hanging the first bankrupt after my salutary law should be established. I have seen no Annuals, and wish to see none. I like your fun upon them, and was quite pleased with Bowles's sonnet. Hood is, or was, at Brighton; but a note (prose or rhyme) to him, Robert Street, Adelphi, I am sure, would extract a copy of *his,* which also I have not seen. Wishing you and yours all health, I conclude while these frail glasses are to me—eyes.

C. L.

LETTER CCCLXXXV

TO WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

January 22, 1830.

AND is it a year since we parted from you at the steps of Edmonton stage? There are not now the years that there used to be. The tale of the dwindled age of men, reported of successional mankind, is true of the same man only. We do not live a year in a year now. 'T is a *punctum stans.* The seasons pass us with indifference. Spring cheers not, nor Winter heightens our gloom; Autumn hath foregone its moralities,—they are "hey-pass repass," as in a show-box. Yet, as far as last year occurs back, —for they scarce show a reflex now, they make no memory as heretofore,—'t was sufficiently gloomy. Let the sullen nothing pass. Suffice it, that after sad spirits, prolonged through many of its months, as it called them, we have cast our skins; have taken a farewell of the pompous, troublesome trifle, called housekeeping, and are settled down into poor boarders and lodgers at next door with an old couple, the Baucis and Baucida of dull Enfield. Here we have nothing to do with our victuals but to eat them; with the garden but to see it grow; with the taxgatherer but to hear him knock; with the maid but to hear her scolded. Scot and lot, butcher, baker, are things unknown to us, save as spectators of the pageant. We are fed we know not how; quietists—confiding ravens. We have *otium pro dignitate,* a re-

spectable insignificance. Yet in the self-condemned obliviousness, in the stagnation, some molesting yearnings of life, not quite killed, rise, prompting me that there was a London, and that I was of that old Jerusalem. In dreams I am in Fleet Market, but I wake and cry to sleep again. I die hard, a stubborn Eloisa in this detestable Paraclete. What have I gained by health? Intolerable dulness. What by early hours and moderate meals? A total blank. O never let the lying poets be believed, who 'tice men from the cheerful haunts of streets, or think they mean it not of a country village. In the ruins of Palmyra I could gird myself up to solitude, or muse to the snorings of the Seven Sleepers; but to have a little teazing image of a town about one; country folks that do not look like country folks; shops two yards square, half-a-dozen apples, and two penn'orth of overlooked ginger-bread, for the lofty fruiterers of Oxford Street; and, for the immortal book and print stalls, a circulating library that stands still, where the show-picture is a last year's Valentine, and whither the fame of the last ten Scotch novels has not yet travelled,—(marry, they just begin to be conscious of the *Redgauntlet:*)—to have a new plastered flat church, and to be wishing that it was but a cathedral! The very blackguards here are degenerate; the topping gentry, stockbrokers; the passengers too many to insure your quiet, or let you go about whistling or gaping, too few to be the fine indifferent pageants of Fleet Street. Confining, room-

keeping, thickest Winter, is yet more bearable here than the gaudy months. Among one's books at one's fire by candle, one is soothed into an oblivion that one is not in the country; but with the light the green fields return, till I gaze, and in a calenture can plunge myself into St. Giles's. O let no native Londoner imagine that health, and rest, and innocent occupation, interchange of converse sweet, and recreative study, can make the country anything better than altogether odious and detestable! A garden was the primitive prison, till man, with Promethean felicity and boldness, luckily sinned himself out of it. Thence followed Babylon, Nineveh, Venice, London, haberdashers, goldsmiths, taverns, playhouses, satires, epigrams, puns,—these all came in on the town part, and the thither side of innocence. Man found out inventions. From my den I return you condolence for your decaying sight; not for anything there is to see in the country, but for the miss of the pleasure of reading a London newspaper. The poets are as well to listen to; anything high may, nay must, be read out; you read it to yourself with an imaginary auditor; but the light paragraphs must be glid over by the proper eye; mouthing mumbles their gossamery substance. 'T is these trifles I should mourn in fading sight. A newspaper is the single gleam of comfort I receive here; it comes from rich Cathay with tidings of mankind. Yet I could not attend to it, read out by the most beloved voice. But your eyes do not get worse, I gather. O for the

collyrium of Tobias inclosed in a whiting's liver, to send you with no apocryphal good wishes! The last long time I heard from you, you had knocked your head against something. Do not do so; for your head (I do not flatter) is not a knob, or the top of a brass nail, or the end of a nine-pin,—unless a Vulcanian hammer could fairly batter a "Recluse" out of it; then would I bid the smirched god knock and knock lustily, the two-handed skinker. Mary must squeeze out a line *propriâ manu*, but indeed her fingers have been incorrigibly nervous to letter writing for a long interval. 'T will please you all to hear, that though I fret like a lion in a net, her present health and spirits are better than they have been for some time past. She is absolutely three years and a half younger, as I tell her, since we have adopted this boarding plan.

Our providers are an honest pair, Dame W[estwood] and her husband. He, when the light of prosperity shined on them, a moderately thriving haberdasher, within Bow bells, retired since with something under a competence; writes himself parcel gentleman; hath borne parish offices; sings fine old sea songs at threescore and ten; sighs only now and then when he thinks that he has a son on his hands, about fifteen, whom he finds a difficulty in getting out into the world, and then checks a sigh with muttering, as I once heard him prettily, not meaning to be heard, "I have married my daughter, however"; takes the weather as it comes; outsides

it to town in severest season; and o' winter nights tells old stories not tending to literature (how comfortable to author-rid folks!), and has *one anecdote*, upon which and about forty pounds a year he seems to have retired in green old age. It was how he was a rider in his youth, travelling for shops, and once (not to balk his employer's bargain) on a sweltering day in August, rode foaming into Dunstable upon a mad horse, to the dismay and expostulatory wonderment of innkeepers, ostlers, etc., who declared they would not have bestrid the beast to win the Derby. Understand, the creature galled to death and desperation by gad-flies, cormorant-winged, worse than beset Inachus's daughter. This he tells, this he brindles and burnishes on a Winter's eve; 't is his star of set glory, his rejuvenescence, to descant upon. Far from me be it (*dii avertant*) to look a gift story in the mouth, or cruelly to surmise (as those who doubt the plunge of Curtius) that the inseparate conjuncture of man and beast, the centaur-phenomenon that staggered all Dunstable, might have been the effect of unromantic necessity; that the horse-part carried the reasoning, willy nilly; that needs must when such a devil drove; that certain spiral configurations in the frame of T[homas] W[estwood] unfriendly to alighting, made the alliance more forcible than voluntary. Let him enjoy his fame for me, nor let me hint a whisper that shall dismount Bellerophon. But in case he was an involuntary martyr, yet if in the fiery conflict he buckled the soul of a con-

stant haberdasher to him, and adopted his flames, let accident and him share the glory. You would all like Thomas Westwood. How weak is painting to describe a man! Say that he stands four feet and a nail high by his own yard measure, which, like the sceptre of Agamemnon, shall never sprout again, still you have no adequate idea; nor when I tell you that his dear hump, which I have favoured in the picture, seems to me of the buffalo—indicative and repository of mild qualities, a budget of kindnesses —still you have not the man. Knew you old Norris of the Temple? sixty years ours and our father's friend? He was not more natural to us than this old W., the acquaintance of scarce more weeks. Under his roof now ought I to take my rest, but that back-looking ambition tells me I might yet be a Londoner! Well, if we ever do move, we have encumbrances the less to impede us; all our furniture has faded under the auctioneer's hammer, going for nothing, like the tarnished frippery of the prodigal, and we have only a spoon or two left to bless us. Clothed we came into Enfield, and naked we must go out of it. I would live in London, shirtless, bookless. Henry Crabb is at Rome; advices to that effect have reached Bury. But by solemn legacy he bequeathed at parting (whether he should live or die) a turkey of Suffolk to be sent every succeeding Christmas to us and divers other friends. What a genuine old bachelor's action! I fear he will find the air of Italy too classic. His station is in the Harz forest; his soul

is be-Goethed. Miss Kelly we never see; Talfourd not this half-year: the latter flourishes, but the exact number of his children (God forgive me!) I have utterly forgotten. We single people are often out in our count there. Shall I say two? We see scarce anybody. Can I cram loves enough to you all in this little O? Excuse particularising. C. L.

LETTER CCCLXXXVI

TO BERNARD BARTON

February 25, 1830.

DEAR B. B.—To reply to you by return of post, I must gobble up my dinner and despatch this *in propriâ personâ* to the office, to be in time. So take it from me hastily, that you are perfectly welcome to furnish A. C. with the scrap, which I had almost forgotten writing. The more my character comes to be known, the less my veracity will come to be suspected. Time every day clears up some suspected narrative of Herodotus, Bruce, and others of us great travellers. Why, that Joseph Paice was as real a person as Joseph Hume, and a great deal pleasanter. A careful observer of life, Bernard, has no need to invent. Nature romances it for him. Dinner plates rattle, and I positively shall incur indigestion by carrying it half concocted to the post-house. Let me congratulate you on the Spring coming in, and do you in return condole with me on the Winter

going out. When the old one goes, seldom comes a better. I dread the prospect of Summer, with his all-day-long days. No need of his assistance to make country places dull. With fire and candle-light I can dream myself in Holborn. With lightsome skies shining in to bed-time I can not. This Mesech, and these tents of Kedar—I would dwell in the skirts of Jericho rather, and think every blast of the coming-in mail a ram's horn. Give me old London at fire and plague times rather than these tepid gales, healthy country air, and purposeless exercise.

Leg of mutton absolutely on the table.

Take our hasty loves and short farewell.

C. L.

LETTER CCCLXXXVII

TO MRS. HAZLITT

March 4, 1830.

DEAR SARAH—I was meditating to come and see you, but I am unable for the walk. We are both very unwell, and under affliction for poor Emma, who has had a very dangerous brain fever, and is lying very ill at Bury, from whence I expect a summons to fetch her. We are very sorry for your confinement. Any books I have are at your service. I am almost, I may say *quite* sure, that letters to India pay no postage, and may go by the regular Post Office, now in St. Martin's le Grand. I think any receiving house would take them. I wish I could confirm your hopes about Dick Norris. But it is quite

a dream. Some old Bencher of his surname is made *Treasurer* for the year, I suppose, which is an annual office. Norris was Sub-Treasurer, quite a different thing. They were pretty well in the Summer; since when we have heard nothing of them.

Mrs. Reynolds is better than she has been for years. She is with a disagreeable woman that she has taken a mighty fancy to, out of spite to a rival woman she used to live and quarrel with. She grows quite *fat*, they tell me, and may live as long as I do, to be a tormenting rent-charge to my diminished income. We go on pretty comfortably in our new place. I will come and have a talk with you when poor Emma's affair is settled, and will bring books. At present I am weak, and could hardly bring my legs home yesterday after a much shorter stroll than to Northaw. Mary has got her bonnet on for a short expedition. May you get better, as the Spring comes on. She sends her best love

With mine. C. L.

Mrs. Hazlitt,
Mrs. Tomlinson's,
Northaw, near Potter's Bar, Herts.

LETTER CCCLXXXVIII

TO REV. JAMES GILLMAN

March 8, 1830.

MY DEAR G.—Your friend Battin (for I knew him immediately by the smooth satinity of

his style) must excuse me for advocating the cause of his friends in Spitalfields. The fact is, I am retained by the Norwich people, and have already appeared in their paper under the signatures of "Lucius Sergius," "Bluff," "Broad-Cloth," "No-trade-to-the-Woollen-Trade," "Anti-plush," etc., in defence of druggets and long camblets. And without this pre-engagement, I feel I should naturally have chosen a side opposite to ——, for in the silken seemingness of his nature there is that which offends me. My flesh tingles at such caterpillars. He shall not crawl me over. Let him and his workmen sing the old burthen,

"Heigh ho, ye weavers!"

for any aid I shall offer them in this emergency. I was over St. Luke's the other day with my friend Tuthill, and mightily pleased with one of his contrivances for the comfort and amelioration of the students. They have double cells, in which a pair may lie feet to feet horizontally, and chat the time away as rationally as they can. It must certainly be more sociable for them these warm raving nights. The right-hand truckle in one of these friendly recesses, at present vacant, was preparing, I understood, for Mr. Irving. Poor fellow! it is time he removed from Pentonville. I followed him as far as to Highbury the other day, with a mob at his heels, calling out upon Ermigiddon, who I suppose is some Scotch moderator. He squinted out his favourite eye last Friday, in the fury of possession, upon a poor

woman's shoulders that was crying matches, and has not missed it. The companion truck, as far as I could measure it with my eye, would conveniently fit a person about the length of Coleridge, allowing for a reasonable drawing up of the feet, not at all painful. Does he talk of moving this quarter? You and I have too much sense to trouble ourselves with revelations; marry, to the same in Greek you may have something professionally to say. Tell C. that he was to come and see us some fine day. Let it be before he moves, for in his new quarters he will necessarily be confined in his conversation to his brother prophet. Conceive the two Rabbis foot to foot, for there are no Gamaliels there to affect an humbler posture! All are masters in that Patmos, where the law is perfect equality; Latmos I should rather say, for they will be Luna's twin darlings; her affection will be ever at the full. Well; keep *your* brains moist with gooseberry this mad March, for the devil of exposition seeketh dry places. C. L.

LETTER CCCLXXXIX

TO WILLIAM AYRTON

Mr. Westwood's, Chase Side, Enfield,
March 14, 1830.

MY DEAR AYRTON—Your letter, which was only not so pleasant as your appearance would have been, has revived some old images,—Phillips (not the Colonel), with his few hairs bristling up at

the charge of a revoke, which he declares impossible; the old Captain's significant nod over the right shoulder (was it not?); Mrs. B——'s determined questioning of the score, after the game was absolutely gone to the d—l; the plain but hospitable cold boiled-beef suppers at sideboard: all which fancies, redolent of middle age and strengthful spirits, come across us ever and anon in this vale of deliberate senectitude, ycleped Enfield.

You imagine a deep gulf between you and us; and there is a pitable hiatus in *kind* between St. James's Park and this extremity of Middlesex. But the mere distance in turnpike roads is a trifle. The roof of a coach swings you down in an hour or two. We have a sure hot joint on a Sunday; and when had we better? I suppose you know that ill health has obliged us to give up house-keeping; but we have an asylum at the very next door (only twenty-four inches further from town, which is not material in a country expedition), where a *table d'hôte* is kept for us, without trouble on our parts, and we adjourn after dinner, when one of the old world (old friends) drops casually down among us. Come and find us out; and seal our judicious change with your approbation, whenever the whim bites, or the sun prompts. No need of announcement, for we are sure to be at home.

I keep putting off the subject of my answer. In truth I am not in spirits at present to see Mr. Murray on such a business; but pray offer him my acknowl-

edgments, and an assurance that I should like at least one of his propositions, as I have so much additional matter for the SPECIMENS as might make two volumes in all; or ONE (new edition), omitting such better-known authors as Beaumont and Fletcher, Jonson, etc.

But we are both in trouble at present. A very dear young friend of ours, who passed her Christmas holidays here, has been taken dangerously ill with a fever, from which she is very precariously recovering, and I expect a summons to fetch her when she is well enough to bear the journey from Bury. It is Emma Isola, with whom we got acquainted at our first visit to your sister at Cambridge, and she has been an occasional inmate with us (and of late years much more frequently) ever since. While she is in this danger, and till she is out of it, and here in a probable way to recovery, I feel that I have no spirits for an engagement of any kind. It has been a terrible shock to us; therefore I beg that you will make my handsomest excuses to Mr. Murray.

Our very kindest loves to Mrs. A. and the younger A.'s.

Your unforgotten, C. LAMB.

LETTER CCCXC

TO MRS. WILLIAMS

Enfield, April 2, 1830.

DEAR MADAM—I have great pleasure in letting you know Miss Isola has suffered very little from fatigue on her long journey. I am ashamed to say that I came home rather the more tired of the two; but I am a very unpractised traveller. We found my sister very well in health, only a little impatient to see her; and after a few hysterical tears for gladness, all was comfortable again. We arrived here from Epping between five and six.

The incidents of our journey were trifling, but you bade us tell them. We had then in the coach a rather talkative gentleman, but very civil all the way; and took up a servant maid at Stortford going to a sick mistress. To the latter a participation in the hospitalities of your nice rusks and sandwiches proved agreeable, as it did to my companion, who took merely a sip of the weakest wine and water with them. The former engaged me in a discourse for full twenty miles, on the probable advantages of steam carriages, which, being merely problematical, I bore my part in with some credit, in spite of my totally unengineer-like faculties. But when, somewhere about Stanstead, he put an unfortunate question to me, as to "the probability of its turning out a good turnip season," and when I, who am still less of an agriculturist than a steam philosopher, not knowing a turnip

from a potato ground, innocently made answer, "I believe it depends very much upon boiled legs of mutton," my unlucky reply set Miss Isola a laughing to a degree that disturbed her tranquillity for the only moment in our journey. I am afraid my credit sank very low with my other fellow-traveller, who had thought he had met with a *well-informed passenger*, which is an accident so desirable in a stage coach. We were rather less communicative, but still friendly, the rest of the way.

How I employed myself between Epping and Enfield, the poor verses in the front of my paper may inform you, which you may please to christen an "Acrostic in a Cross Road," and which I wish were worthier of the lady they refer to; but I trust you will plead my pardon to her on a subject so delicate as a lady's good *name*. Your candour must acknowledge that they are written straight. And now, dear Madam, I have left myself hardly space to express my sense of the friendly reception I found at Fornham. Mr. Williams will tell you that we had the pleasure of a slight meeting with him on the road, where I could almost have told him, but that it seemed ungracious, that such had been your hospitality, that I scarcely missed the good master of the family at Fornham, though heartily I should have rejoiced to have made a little longer acquaintance with him. I will say nothing of our deeper obligations to both of you, because I think we agreed at Fornham that gratitude may be over-exacted on the

part of the obliging, and over-expressed on the part of the obliged person.

My sister and Miss Isola join in respects to Mr. Williams and yourself. Miss Isola will have the pleasure of writing to you next week, and we shall hope at your leisure to hear of your own health, etc.

I am, dear Madam, with great respect, your obliged

CHARLES LAMB.

LETTER CCCXCI

Enfield, Good Friday, 1830.

DEAR MADAM—I do assure you that your verses gratified me very much, and my sister is quite *proud* of them. For the first time in my life I congratulated myself upon the shortness and meanness of my name. Had it been Schwartzenberg or Esterhazy, it would have put you to some puzzle. I am afraid I shall sicken you of acrostics, but this last was written *to order*. I beg you to have inserted in your county paper something like this advertisement: "To the nobility, gentry, and others, about Bury.—C. Lamb respectfully informs his friends and the public in general, that he is leaving off business in the acrostic line, as he is going into an entirely new line. Rebuses and Charades done as usual, and upon the old terms. Also, Epitaphs to suit the memory of any person deceased."

I thought I had adroitly escaped the rather unpliable name of "Williams," curtailing your poor

daughters to their proper surnames; but it seems you would not let me off so easily. If these trifles amuse you, I am paid. Though really 't is an operation too much like—"A, apple-pie; B, bit it." To make amends, I request leave to lend you the "Excursion," and to recommend, in particular, the "Churchyard Stories,"—in the seventh book, I think. They will strengthen the tone of your mind after its weak diet on acrostics.

Miss Isola is writing, and will tell you that we are going on very comfortably. Her sister is just come. She blames my last verses, as being more written on Mr. Williams than on yourself; but how should I have parted whom a Superior Power has brought together? I beg you will jointly accept of our best respects, and pardon your obsequious if not troublesome correspondent, C. L.

P. S.—I am the worst folder-up of a letter in the world, except certain Hottentots, in the land of Caffre, who never fold up their letters at all, writing very badly upon skins, etc.

LETTER CCCXCII

TO ROBERT SOUTHEY

May 10, 1830.

DEAR Southey—My friend Hone, whom you would like *for a friend*, I found deeply impressed with your generous notice of him in your

beautiful *Life of Bunyan*, which I am just now full of. He has written to you for leave to publish a certain good-natured letter. I write not this to enforce his request, for we are fully aware that the refusal of such publication would be quite consistent with all that is good in your character. Neither he nor I expect it from you, nor exact it; but if you would consent to it, you would oblige me by it, as well as him. He is just now in a critical situation: kind friends have opened a coffee-house for him in the City, but their means have not extended to the purchase of coffee-pots, credit for Reviews, newspapers, and other paraphernalia. So I am sitting in the skeleton of a possible divan. What right I have to interfere, you best know. Look on me as a dog who went once temporarily insane, and bit you, and now begs for a crust. Will you set your wits to a dog?

Our object is to open a subscription, which my friends of the *Times* are most willing to forward for him, but think that a leave from you to publish would aid it.

But not an atom of respect or kindness will or shall it abate in either of us if you decline it. Have this strongly in your mind.

Those *Every-Day* and *Table* Books will be a treasure a hundred years hence, but they have failed to make Hone's fortune.

Here his wife and all his children are about me, gaping for coffee customers; but how should they come in, seeing no pot boiling!

Enough of Hone. I saw Coleridge a day or two since. He has had some severe attack, not paralytic; but if I had not heard of it I should not have found it out. He looks, and especially speaks, strong. How are all the Wordsworths and all the Southeys? whom I am obliged to you if you have not brought up haters of the name of C. LAMB.

P. S.—I have gone lately into the acrostic line. I find genius (such as I had) declines with me, but I get clever. Do you know anybody that wants charades, or such things, for Albums? I do 'em at so much a sheet. Perhaps an epigram (not a very happy-gram) I did for a school-boy yesterday may amuse. I pray Jove he may not get a flogging for any false quantity; but 't is, with one exception, the only Latin verses I have made for forty years; and I did it "to order."

CUIQUE SUUM

Adsciscit sibi divitias et opes alienas
Fur, rapiens, spolians quod mihi, quodque tibi,
Proprium erat, temnens haec verba, meumque tuumque;
Omne suum est: tandem cuique suum tribuit:
Dat resti collum; vestes, vah! carnifici dat;
Sese Diabolo: sic bene, Cuique suum.

I write from Hone's; therefore Mary cannot send her love to Mrs. Southey, but I do.

Yours ever, C. L.

TO MOXON—ASBURY

LETTER CCCXCIII

TO MR. MOXON

May 12, 1830.

DEAR M.—I dined with your and my Rogers, at Mr. Cary's, yesterday. Cary consulted me on the proper bookseller to offer a lady's MS. novel to. I said I would write to *you*. But I wish you would call on the translator of Dante, at the British Museum, and talk with him. He is the pleasantest of clergymen. I told him of all Rogers's handsome behaviour to you, and you are already no stranger. Go! I made Rogers laugh about your Nightingale Sonnet, not having heard one. 'T is a good sonnet, notwithstanding. You shall have the books shortly.

C. L.

LETTER CCCXCIV

TO DR. ASBURY

[*May 1830.*]

DEAR SIR—Some draughts and boluses have been brought here which we conjecture were meant for the young lady whom you saw this morning, though they are labelled for

MISS ISOLA LAMB.

No such person is known on the Chase Side, and she is fearful of taking medicines which may have been made up for another patient. She begs me to

say that she was born an *Isola* and christened *Emma*. Moreover that she is Italian by birth, and that her ancestors were from Isola Bella (Fair Island) in the kingdom of Naples. She has never changed her name and rather mournfully adds that she has no prospect at present of doing so. She is literally I. SOLA, or single, at present. Therefore she begs that the obnoxious monosyllable may be omitted on future Phials,—an innocent syllable enough, you 'll say, but she has no claim to it. It is the bitterest pill of the seven you have sent her. When a lady loses her good *name*, what is to become of her? Well she must swallow it as well as she can, but begs the dose may not be repeated.

Yours faithfully, CHARLES LAMB (not Isola).

LETTER CCCXCV

TO VINCENT NOVELLO

Friday, May 14, 1830.

DEAR NOVELLO—Mary hopes you have not forgot you are to spend a day with us on Wednesday. That it may be a long one, cannot you secure places now for Mrs. Novello, yourself, and the Clarkes? We have just table-room for four. Five make my good landlady fidgety; six, to begin to fret; seven, to approximate to fever-point. But, seriously, we shall prefer four to two or three. We shall have from half-past ten to six, when the coach goes off,

to scent the country. And pray write *now*, to say you do so come, for dear Mrs. Westwood else will be on the tenters of incertitude. C. L.

Vincent Novello, Esq.,
66, Great Queen Street, Lincoln's-Inn Fields.

LETTER CCCXCVI

TO MR. HONE

May 21, 1830.

DEAR HONE—I thought you would be pleased to see this letter. Pray, if you have time, to call on Novello, No. 66, Great Queen St. I am anxious to learn whether he received his Album I sent on Friday by our nine o'clock morning stage. If not, beg him inquire at the *Old Bell*, Holborn.

CHARLES LAMB.

Southey will see in the *Times* all we proposed omitting is omitted.

LETTER CCCXCVII

TO VINCENT NOVELLO

May 1830.

DEAR N.—Pray write immediately to say "The book has come safe." I am anxious, not so much for the autographs, as for that bit of the hair-brush. I enclose a cinder which belonged to Shield, when he was poor, and lit his own fires. Any memorial of a great musical genius, I know, is acceptable; and

Shield has his merits, though Clementi, in my opinion, is far above him in the Sostenuto. Mr. Westwood desires his compliments, and begs to present you with a nail that came out of Jomelli's coffin, who is buried at Naples. C. LAMB.

LETTER CCCXCVIII

TO MRS. HAZLITT

May 24, 1830.

Mary's love? Yes. Mary Lamb is quite well.

Enfield, Saturday.

DEAR SARAH—I found my way to Northaw on Thursday, and saw a very good woman behind a counter, who says also that you are a very good lady. I did not accept her offered glass of wine (home-made, I take it), but craved a cup of ale, with which I seasoned a slice of cold lamb, from a sandwich box, which I ate in her back parlour, and proceeded for Berkhampstead, etc.; lost myself over a heath, and had a day's pleasure. I wish you could walk as I do, and as you used to do. I am sorry to find you are so poorly; and, now I have found my way, I wish you back at Goody Tomlinson's. What a pretty village 't is! I should have come sooner, but was waiting a summons to Bury. Well, it came; and I found the good parson's lady (he was from home) exceedingly hospitable.

Poor Emma, the first moment we were alone,

took me into a corner, and said, "Now, pray, don't *drink;* do check yourself after dinner, for my sake, and when we get home to Enfield you shall drink as much as ever you please, and I won't say a word about it." How I behaved, you may guess, when I tell you that Mrs. Williams and I have written acrostics on each other, and she hoped that she should have "no reason to regret Miss Isola's recovery, by its depriving *her* of our begun correspondence." Emma stayed a month with us, and has gone back (in tolerable health) to her long home, for *she* comes not again for a twelvemonth. I amused Mrs. Williams with an occurrence on our road to Enfield. We travelled with one of those troublesome fellow-passengers in a stage coach, that is called a well-inform'd man. For twenty miles we discoursed about the properties of steam, probabilities of carriage by ditto, till all my science, and more than all, was exhausted, and I was thinking of escaping my torment by getting up on the outside, when, getting into Bishops Stortford, my gentleman, spying some farming land, put an unlucky question to me: "What sort of a crop of turnips do you think we shall have this year?" Emma's eyes turned to me, to know what in the world I could have to say; and she burst into a violent fit of laughter, maugre her pale, serious cheeks, when, with the greatest gravity, I replied, that "it depends, I believe, upon boiled legs of mutton." This clenched our conversation; and my gentleman, with a face half wise, half in scorn, troubled us with no

more conversation, scientific or philosophical, for the remainder of our journey. Ayrton was here yesterday, and as *learned* to the full as my fellow-traveller. What a pity that he will spoil a wit and a devilish pleasant fellow (as he is) by wisdom. He talked on music, and by having read Hawkins and Burney recently, I was enabled to talk of names, and show more knowledge than he had suspected I possessed; and in the end he begged me to shape my thoughts upon paper, which I did after he was gone, and sent him.

FREE THOUGHTS ON SOME EMINENT COMPOSERS

Some cry up Haydn, some Mozart,
Just as the whim bites. For my part,
I do not care a farthing candle
For either of them, or for Handel, etc.

Martin Burney is as good and as odd as ever. We had a dispute about the word "heir," which I contended was pronounced like "air." He said that might be in common parlance; or that we might so use it, speaking of the "Heir at Law," a comedy; but that in the law courts it was necessary to give it a full aspiration, and to say *Hayer;* he thought it might even vitiate a cause, if a counsel pronounced it otherwise. In conclusion, he "would consult Serjeant Wilde"; who gave it against him. Sometimes he falleth into the water; sometimes into the fire. He came down here, and insisted on reading Virgil's "Eneid" all through with me (which he did), because a Counsel must know Latin. Another time he read out all

the Gospel of St. John, because Biblical quotations are very emphatic in a Court of Justice. A third time he would carve a fowl, which he did very ill-favouredly, because "we did not know how indispensable it was for a barrister to do all those things well—those little things were of more consequence than we supposed." So he goes on, harassing about the way to prosperity, and losing it; with a long head, but somewhat a wrong one—harum-scarum. Why does not his guardian angel look to him? He deserves one: may be, he has tired him out.

I am tired with this long scrawl, but I thought in your exile you might like a letter. Commend me to all the wonders in Derbyshire; and tell the devil I humbly kiss my—hand to him.

Yours ever, C. LAMB.

London, May 24, 1830.
Mrs. Hazlitt,
Mr. Broomhead's,
St. Anne's Square, Buxton.

LETTER CCCXCIX

June 3, 1830.

DEAR SARAH—I named your thought about William to his father, who expressed such horror and aversion to the idea of his singing in public, that I cannot meddle in it directly or indirectly. Ayrton is a kind fellow; and if you chuse to consult him by letter, or otherwise, he will give you the best advice, I am sure, very readily. *I have no doubt that*

M. Burney's objection to interfering was the same with mine. With thanks for your pleasant long letter, which is not that of an invalid, and sympathy for your sad sufferings,

I remain, in haste, Yours truly.

[No Signature.]

Mary's kindest love.

Mrs. Hazlitt, at Mr. Broomhead's,
St. Anne's Square, Buxton.

LETTER CCCC

TO WILLIAM HONE

Enfield, June 17, 1830.

I HEREBY impower Matilda Hone to superintend daily the putting into the twopenny post the *Times* newspaper of the day before, directed "Mr. Lamb, Enfield," which shall be held a *full and sufficient direction;* the said insertion to commence on Monday morning next. And I do engage to pay to William Hone, Coffee and Hotel Man, the quarterly sum of £1, to be paid at the ordinary Quarter days, or thereabout, for the reversion of the said paper, commencing with the 24th inst., or Feast of John the Baptist; the intervening days to be held and considered as nothing. C. Lamb.

Vivant Coffee, Coffee-potque!

Mr. Hone,
Coffee-house and Hotel,
13, Gracechurch Street, London.

LETTER CCCCI

TO BERNARD BARTON

June 28, 1830.

DEAR B. B.—Could you dream of my publishing without sending a copy to you? You will find something new to you in the volume, particularly the translations. Moxon will send to you the moment it is out. He is the young poet of *Christmas*, whom the Author of the "Pleasures of Memory" has set up in the book-vending business with a volunteer'd loan of £500. Such munificence is rare to an almost stranger; but Rogers, I am told, has done many good-natured things of this kind.

I need not say how glad to see A. K. and Lucy we should have been,—and still shall be, if it be practicable. Our direction is Mr. Westwood's, Chase Side, Enfield; but alas I know not theirs. We can give them a bed. Coaches come daily from the Bell, Holborn.

You will see that I am worn to the poetical dregs, condescending to acrostics, which are nine fathom beneath album verses; but they were written at the request of the lady where our Emma is, to whom I paid a visit in April to bring home Emma for a change of air after a severe illness, in which she had been treated like a daughter by the good Parson and his whole family. She has since returned to her occupation. I thought on you in Suffolk, but was forty miles from Woodbridge. I heard of you the other day from Mr. Pulham of the India House.

Long live King William the IVth!

S. T. C. says we have had wicked kings, foolish kings, wise kings, good kings (but few), but never till now have we had a blackguard king.

Charles the Second was profligate, but a gentleman.

I have nineteen letters to dispatch this leisure Sabbath for Moxon to send with copies; so you will forgive me short measure, and believe me,

Yours ever, C. L.

Pray do let us see your Quakeresses if possible.

LETTER CCCCII

TO WILLIAM HONE

July 1, 1830.

PRAY let Matilda keep my newspapers till you hear from me, as we are meditating a town residence. C. LAMB.

Let her keep them as the apple of her eye.

Mr. Hone,
13, Gracechurch Street.

LETTER CCCCIII

TO BERNARD BARTON

August 30, 1830.

DEAR B. B.—My address is 34, Southampton Buildings, Holborn. For God's sake do not let

me be pester'd with Annuals. They are all rogues who edit them, and something else who write in them. I am still alone, and very much out of sorts, and cannot spur up my mind to writing. The sight of one of those year books makes me sick. I get nothing by any of 'em, not even a copy.

Thank you for your warm interest about my little volume, for the critics on which I care the five hundred thousandth part of the tythe of a half-farthing. I am too old a Militant for that. How noble, tho', in Robert Southey to come forward for an old friend, who had treated him so unworthily!

Moxon has a shop without customers, I a book without readers. But what a clamour against a poor collection of Album verses, as if we had put forth an Epic! I cannot scribble a long letter: I am, when not on foot, very desolate, and take no interest in anything, scarce hate anything but Annuals. I am in an interregnum of thought and feeling. What a beautiful Autumn morning this is, if it was but with me as in times past when the candle of the Lord shined round me! I cannot even muster enthusiasm to admire the French heroism. In better times I hope we may some day meet, and discuss an old poem or two. But if you'd have me not sick, no more of Annuals. C. L., Ex-Elia.

Love to Lucy and A. K. always.

LETTER CCCCIV

TO VINCENT NOVELLO

November 8, 1830.

TEARS are for lighter griefs. Man weeps the doom
That seals a single victim to the tomb.
But when Death riots, when with whelming sway
Destruction sweeps a family away;
When Infancy and Youth, a huddled mass,
All in an instant to oblivion pass,
And Parent hopes are crush'd: what lamentation
Can reach the depth of such a desolation?
Look upward, Feeble Ones! look up, and trust,
That He, who lays this mortal frame in dust,
Still hath the immortal Spirit in His keeping.
In Jesus' sight they are not dead, but sleeping.

Dear N., will these lines do? I despair of better. Poor Mary is in a deplorable state here at Enfield.

Love to all,

C. LAMB.

LETTER CCCCV

TO MR. MOXON

November 12, 1830.

DEAR MOXON—I have brought my sister to Enfield, being sure that she had no hope of recovery in London. Her state of mind is deplorable beyond any example. I almost fear whether she has strength at her time of life ever to get out of it.

Here she must be nursed, and neither see nor hear of anything in the world out of her sick chamber. The mere hearing that Southey had called at our lodgings totally upset her. Pray see him, or hear of him at Mr. Rickman's, and excuse my not writing to him. I dare not write or receive a letter in her presence; every little talk so agitates her. Westwood will receive any letter for me, and give it me privately.

Pray assure Southey of my kindliest feelings towards him; and if you do not see him, send this to him.

Kindest remembrances to your sister, and believe me ever yours, C. Lamb.

Remember me kindly to the Allsops.

LETTER CCCCVI

TO GEORGE DYER

December 20, 1830.

Dear Dyer—I should have written before to thank you for your kind letter, written with your own hand. It glads us to see your writing. It will give you pleasure to hear that after so much illness we are in tolerable health and spirits once more. Poor Enfield, that has been so peaceable hitherto, has caught the inflammatory fever; the tokens are upon her; and a great fire was blazing last night in the barns and haystacks of a farmer, about half a

mile from us. Where will these things end? There is no doubt of its being the work of some ill-disposed rustic; but how is he to be discovered? They go to work in the dark with strange chemical preparations, unknown to our forefathers. There is not even a dark lantern, to have a chance of detecting these Guy Fauxes. We are past the iron age, and are got into the fiery age, undreamed of by Ovid. You are lucky in Clifford's Inn, where I think you have few ricks or stacks worth the burning. Pray, keep as little corn by you as you can for fear of the worst. It was never good times in England since the poor began to speculate upon their condition. Formerly they jogged on with as little reflection as horses. The whistling ploughman went cheek by jowl with his brother that neighed. Now the biped carries a box of phosphorus in his leather breeches, and in the dead of night the half-illuminated beast steals his magic potion into a cleft in a barn, and half the country is grinning with new fires. Farmer Graystock said something to the touchy rustic, that he did not relish, and he writes his distaste in flames. What a power to intoxicate his crude brains, just muddlingly awake to perceive that something is wrong in the social system,—what a hellish faculty above gunpowder! Now the rich and poor are fairly pitted. We shall see who can hang or burn fastest. It is not always revenge that stimulates these kindlings. There is a love of exerting mischief. Think of a disrespected clod that was trod into earth, that was

nothing, on a sudden by damned arts refined into an exterminating angel, devouring the fruits of the earth and their growers in a mass of fire; what a new existence! What a temptation above Lucifer's! Would Clod be anything but a clod if he could resist it? Why, here was a spectacle last night for a whole country, a bonfire visible to London, alarming her guilty towers, and shaking the Monument with an ague fit, all done by a little vial of phosphor in a clown's fob. How he must grin, and shake his empty noddle in clouds! The Vulcanian epicure! Alas! can we ring the bells backward? Can we unlearn the arts that pretend to civilise, and then burn the world? There is a march of science; but who shall beat the drums for its retreat? Who shall persuade the boor that phosphor will not ignite? Seven goodly stacks of hay, with corn-barns proportionable, lie smoking ashes and chaff, which man and beast would sputter out and reject like those apples of asphaltes and bitumen. The food for the inhabitants of earth will quickly disappear. Hot rolls may say, "Fuimus panes, fuit quartern-loaf, et ingens gloria apple-pasty-orum." That the good old munching system may last thy time and mine, good un-incendiary George, is the devout prayer of thine,

To the last crust, C. Lamb.

LETTER CCCCVII

February 22, 1831.

DEAR DYER—Mr. Rogers, and Mr. Rogers's friends, are perfectly assured that you never intended any harm by an innocent couplet, and that in the revivification of it by blundering Barker you had no hand whatever. To imagine that at this time of day Rogers broods over a fantastic expression of more than thirty years' standing, would be to suppose him indulging his "Pleasures of Memory" with a vengeance. You never penned a line which for its own sake you need, dying, wish to blot. You mistake your heart if you think you *can* write a lampoon. Your whips are rods of roses. Your spleen has ever had for its object vices, not the vicious; abstract offences, not the concrete sinner. But you are sensitive, and wince as much at the consciousness of having committed a compliment, as another man would at the perpetration of an affront. But do not lug me into the same soreness of conscience with yourself. I maintain, and will to the last hour, that I never writ of you but *con amore;* that if any allusion was made to your near-sightedness, it was not for the purpose of mocking an infirmity, but of connecting it with scholar-like habits: for is it not erudite and scholarly to be somewhat near of sight before age naturally brings on the malady? You could not then plead the *obrepens senectus.* Did I not moreover make it an apology for a certain *ab-*

sence, which some of our friends may have experienced, when you have not on a sudden made recognition of them in a casual street-meeting? And did I not strengthen your excuse for this slowness of recognition, by further accounting morally for the present engagement of your mind in worthy objects? Did I not, in your person, make the handsomest apology for absent-of-mind people that was ever made? If these things be not so, I never knew what I wrote, or meant by my writing, and have been penning libels all my life without being aware of it. Does it follow that I should have exprest myself exactly in the same way of those dear old eyes of yours *now*, now that Father Time has conspired with a hard task-master to put a last extinguisher upon them? I should as soon have insulted the Answerer of Salmasius when he awoke up from his ended task and saw no more with mortal vision. But you are many films removed yet from Milton's calamity. You write perfectly intelligibly. Marry, the letters are not all of the same size or tallness; but that only shows your proficiency in the *hands*, text, german-hand, court-hand, sometimes law-hand, and affords variety. You pen better than you did a twelvemonth ago; and if you continue to improve, you bid fair to win the golden pen which is the prize at your young gentlemen's academy. But you must beware of Valpy, and his printing-house, that hazy cave of Trophonius, out of which it was a mercy that you escaped with a glimmer. Beware

of MSS. and Variæ Lectiones. Settle the text for once in your mind, and stick to it. You have some years' good sight in you yet, if you do not tamper with it. It is not for you (for *us* I should say) to go poring into Greek contractions, and star-gazing upon slim Hebrew points. We have yet the sight

> Of sun, and moon, and star, throughout the year,
> And man and woman.

You have vision enough to discern Mrs. Dyer from the other comely gentlewoman who lives up at staircase No. 5; or, if you should make a blunder in the twilight, Mrs. Dyer has too much good sense to be jealous for a mere effect of imperfect optics. But don't try to write the Lord's Prayer, Creed, and Ten Commandments in the compass of a half-penny; nor run after a midge, or a mote, to catch it; and leave off hunting for needles in bundles of hay, for all these things strain the eyes. The snow is six feet deep in some parts here. I must put on jack-boots to get at the Post-Office with this. It is not good for weak eyes to pore upon snow too much. It lies in drifts. I wonder what its drift is; only that it makes good pancakes, remind Mrs. Dyer. It turns a pretty green world into a white one. It glares too much for an innocent colour methinks. I wonder why you think I dislike gilt edges. They set off a letter marvellously. Yours, for instance, looks for all the world like a tablet of curious *hieroglyphics* in a gold frame. But don't go and lay this to your eyes.

You always wrote hieroglyphically, yet not to come up to the mystical notations and conjuring characters of Dr. Parr. You never wrote what I call a schoolmaster's hand, like Mrs. Clarke; nor a woman's hand, like Southey; nor a missal hand, like Porson; nor an all-of-the-wrong-side sloping hand, like Miss Hayes; nor a dogmatic, Mede-and-Persian, peremptory hand, like Rickman; but you ever wrote what I call a Grecian's hand; what the Grecians write (or used) at Christ's Hospital; such as Whalley would have admired, and Boyer have applauded, but Smith or Atwood (writing-masters) would have horsed you for. Your boy-of-genius hand and your mercantile hand are various. By your flourishes, I should think you never learned to make eagles or corkscrews, or flourish the governors' names in the writing-school; and by the tenour and cut of your letters, I suspect you were never in it at all. By the length of this scrawl you will think I have a design upon your optics; but I have writ as large as I could, out of respect to them; too large, indeed, for beauty. Mine is a sort of deputy Grecian's hand; a little better, and more of a worldly hand, than a Grecian's, but still remote from the mercantile. I don't know how it is, but I keep my rank in fancy still since school-days. I can never forget I was a deputy Grecian! And writing to you, or to Coleridge, besides affection, I feel a reverential deference as to Grecians still. I keep my soaring way above the Great Erasmians, yet far beneath the other. Alas! what am I now?

What is a Leadenhall clerk, or India pensioner, to a deputy Grecian? How art thou fallen, O Lucifer! Just room for our loves to Mrs. D., etc.

C. Lamb.

LETTER CCCCVIII

TO REV. H. F. CARY

April 13, 1831.

DEAR C.—I am *daily* for this week expecting Wordsworth, who will not name a day. I have been expecting him by months and by weeks; but he has reduced the hope within the seven fractions hebdomadal of this hebdoma. Therefore I am sorry I cannot see you on Thursday. I think within a week or two I shall be able to invite myself some day for a day, but we hermits with difficulty poke out of our shells. Within that ostraceous retirement I meditate not unfrequently on you. My sister's kindest remembrances to you both. C. L.

LETTER CCCCIX

TO BERNARD BARTON

April 30, 1831.

VIR Bone!—Recepi literas tuas amicissimas, et in mentem venit responsuro mihi, vel raro, vel nunquam, inter nos intercedisse Latinam linguam, organum rescribendi, loquendive. Epistolæ tuæ, Plinianis elegantiis (supra quod Tremulo deceat) refertæ, tam a verbis Plinianis adeo abhorrent, ut ne

vocem quamquam (Romanam scilicet) habere videaris, quam "ad canem," ut aiunt, "rejectare possis." Forsan desuetudo Latinissandi ad vernaculam linguam usitandam, plusquam opus sit, coegit. Per adagia quædam nota, et in ore omnium pervulgata, ad Latinitatis perditæ recuperationem revocare te institui.

Felis in abaco est, et ægrè videt.

Omne quod splendet nequaquam aurum putes.

Imponas equo mendicum, equitabit idem ad diabolum.

Fur commodè a fure prenditur.

O MARIA, MARIA, valdé CONTRARIA, quomodo crescit hortulus tuus?

Nunc majora canamus.

Thomas, Thomas, de Islington, uxorem duxit die nuperâ Dominicâ. Reduxit domum posterâ. Succedenti baculum emit. Postridie ferit illam. Ægrescit illa subsequenti. Proximâ (nempe Veneris) est mortua. Plurimum gestiit Thomas, quòd appropinquanti Sabbato efferenda sit.

Horner quidam Johannulus in angulo sedebat, artocreas quasdam deglutiens. Inseruit pollices, pruna nana evellens, et magnâ voce exclamavit "Dii boni, quàm bonus puer fio!"

Diddle-diddle-dumkins! meus unicus filius Johannes cubitum ivit, integris braccis, caligâ unâ tantum, indutus. Diddle-diddle, etc. DA CAPO.

Hic adsum saltans Joannula. Cum nemo adsit mihi, semper resto sola.

Ænigma mihi hoc solvas, et Œdipus fies.

Quâ ratione assimulandus sit equus TREMULO?

Quippe cui tota communicatio sit per HAY et NEIGH, juxta consilium illud Dominicum, "Fiat omnis communicatio vestra YEA et NAY."

In his nugis caram diem consumo, dum invigilo valetudini carioris nostræ Emmæ, quæ apud nos jamdudum ægrotat. Salvere vos jubet mecum Maria mea, ipsa integrâ valetudine. ELIA.

Ab agro Enfeldiense datum, Aprilis nescio quibus Calendis—Davus sum, non Calendarius.

P. S.—Perdita in toto est Billa Reformatura.

LETTER CCCCX

TO REV. H. F. CARY

Datum ab agro Enfeldiensi,
Maii die sextâ, 1831.

ASSIDENS est mihi bona soror, Euripiden evolvens, donum vestrum, carissime Cary, pro quo gratias agimus, lecturi atque iterum lecturi idem. Pergratus est liber ambobus, nempe "Sacerdotis Commiserationis," sacrum opus a te ipso Humanissimæ Religionis Sacerdote dono datum. Lachrymantes gavisuri sumus; est ubi dolor fiat voluptas; nec semper dulce mihi est ridere; aliquando commutandum est he! he! he! cum heu! heu! heu!

A Musis Tragicis me non penitus abhorruisse

testis sit Carmen Calamitosum, nescio quo autore linguâ prius vernaculâ scriptum, et nuperrimè a me ipso Latine versum, scilicet, "Tom Tom of Islington." Tenuistine?

"Thomas Thomas de Islington,
Uxorem duxit Die quâdam Solis,
Abduxit domum sequenti die,
Emit baculum subsequenti,
Vapulat illa posterâ,
Ægrotat succedenti, Mortua fit crastinâ."

Et miro gaudio afficitur Thomas luce posterâ quod subsequenti (nempe, Dominicâ) uxor sit efferenda.

"En Iliades Domesticas!
En circulum calamitatum!
Planè hebdomadalem tragœdiam."

I nunc et confer Euripiden vestrum his luctibus, hâc morte uxoriâ; confer Alcesten! Hecuben! quas non antiquas Heroinas Dolorosas.

Suffundor genas lachrymis tantas strages revolvens. Quid restat nisi quod Tecum Tuam Caram salutemus ambosque valere jubeamus, nosmet ipsi bene valentes. ELIA.

LETTER CCCCXI

TO JOHN TAYLOR

June 8, 1831.

DEAR SIR—I am extremely sorry to be obliged to decline the article proposed, particularly as I should have been flattered with a Plate accom-

panying it. In the first place, Midsummer Day is not a topic I could make anything of, I am so pure a Cockney, and little read besides in May games and antiquities; and in the second, I am here at Margate, spoiling my holydays with a Review I have undertaken for a friend, which I shall barely get through before my return, for that sort of work is a hard task to me. If you will excuse the shortness of my first contribution (and I *know* I can promise nothing more for July) I will endeavour a longer article for *our next*. Will you permit me to say that I think Leigh Hunt would do the Article you propose in a masterly manner, if he has not out-writ himself already upon the subject. I do not return the proof—to save postage—because it is correct, with *one exception*. In the stanza from Wordsworth you have changed *day* into *air* for rhyme's sake. *Day* is the right reading, and *I implore you to restore it*.

The other passage, which you have queried, is to my ear correct. Pray let it stand.

Dear Sir, yours truly, C. LAMB.

Margate.

J. Taylor, Esq.

On second consideration I do enclose the proof.

TO MOXON

LETTER CCCCXII

TO MR. MOXON

August 1831.

DEAR M.—The *R. A.* here memorised was George Dawe, whom I knew well, and heard many anecdotes of, from DANIELS and WESTALL, at H. Rogers's; *to each of them* it will be well to send a magazine in my name. It will fly like wildfire among the Royal Academicians and artists. Could you get hold of Procter?—his chambers are in Lincoln's Inn, at Montagu's; or of Janus Weathercock?—both of their *prose* is capital. Don't encourage poetry. The "Peter's Net" does not intend funny things only. All is fish. And leave out the sickening "Elia" at the end. Then it may comprise letters and characters addressed to Peter; but a signature forces it to be all characteristic of the one man Elia, or the one man, Peter, which cramped me formerly. I have agreed *not* for my sister to know the subjects I choose till the magazine comes out; so beware of speaking of 'em, or writing about 'em, save generally. Be particular about this warning. Can't you drop in some afternoon, and take a bed? The *Athenæum* has been hoaxed with some exquisite poetry, that was, two or three months ago, in "Hone's Book." I like your first Number capitally. But is it not small? Come and see us, week-day if possible.

Send or bring me Hone's Number for August.

The anecdotes of E. and of G. D. are substantially true; what does Elia (or Peter) care for dates?

The poem I mean is in "Hone's Book," as far back as April. I do not know who wrote it; but 't is a poem I envy—*that* and Montgomery's "Last Man": I envy the writers, because I feel I could have done something like them. C. L.

LETTER CCCCXIII

September 5, 1831.

DEAR M.—Your letter's contents pleased me. I am only afraid of taxing you. Yet I want a stimulus, or I think I should drag sadly. I shall keep the moneys in trust, till I see you fairly over the next 1st January: then I shall look upon them as earned. No part of your letter gave me more pleasure (no, not the £10, tho' you may grin) than that you will revisit old Enfield, which I hope will be always a pleasant idea to you.

Yours, very faithfully, C. L.

LETTER CCCCXIV

October 24, 1831.

TO address an abdicated monarch is a nice point of breeding. To give him his lost titles is to mock him; to withhold 'em is to wound him. But his minister, who falls with him, may be gracefully sympathetic. I do honestly feel for your diminution

of honours, and regret even the pleasing cares which are part and parcel of greatness. Your magnanimous submission, and the cheerful tone of your renunciation, in a letter which, without flattery, would have made an "ARTICLE," and which, rarely as I keep letters, shall be preserved, comfort me a little. Will it please, or plague you, to say that when your parcel came I damn'd it? for my pen was warming in my hand at a ludicrous description of a Landscape of an R. A., which I calculated upon sending you to-morrow, the last day you gave me. Now any one calling in, or a letter coming, puts an end to my writing for the day. Little did I think that the mandate had gone out, so destructive to my occupation, so relieving to the apprehensions of the whole body of R. A.'s; so you see I had not quitted the ship while a plank was remaining.

To drop metaphors, I am sure you have done wisely. The very spirit of your epistle speaks that you have a weight off your mind. I have one on mine; the cash in hand, which, as —— less truly says, burns in my pocket. I feel queer at returning it (who does not?), you feel awkward at retaking it (who ought not). Is there no middle way of adjusting this fine embarrassment? I think I have hit upon a medium to skin the sore place over, if not quite to heal it. You hinted that there might be something under £10, by and by, accruing to me—*Devil's Money* (you are sanguine, say £7 : 10s.); that I entirely renounce, and abjure all future interest in: I

insist upon it; and "by him I will not name," I won't touch a penny of it. That will split your loss, one half, and leave me conscientious possessor of what I hold. Less than your assent to this, no proposal will I accept of.

The Rev. Mr. ——, whose name you have left illegible (is it *Seagull?*) never sent me any book on Christ's Hospital, by which I could dream that I was indebted to him for a dedication. Did G.D. send his penny tract to me to convert me to Unitarianism? Dear, blundering soul! why I am as old a one-Goddite as himself. Or did he think his cheap publication would bring over the Methodists over the way here? However, I 'll give it to the pew-opener, in whom I have a little interest, to hand over to the clerk, whose wife she sometimes drinks tea with, for him to lay before the deacon, who exchanges the civility of the hat with him, for to transmit to the minister, who shakes hands with him out of chapel, and he, in all odds, will —— with it.

I wish very much to see you. I leave it to you to come how you will; we shall be very glad (we need not repeat) to see your sister, or sisters, with you; but for you, individually, I will just hint that a dropping in to tea, unlooked for, about five, stopping bread-and-cheese and gin-and-water, is worth a thousand Sundays. I am naturally miserable on a Sunday; but a week-day evening and supper is like old times. Set out *now*, and give no time to deliberation.

P. S.—The second volume of "Elia" is delightful (ly bound, I mean), and quite cheap. Why, man, 'tis a unique!

If I write much more I shall expand into an article, which I cannot afford to let you have so cheap. By the by, to show the perverseness of human will, while I thought I *must* furnish one of those accursed things monthly, it seemed a labour above Hercules's "Twelve" in a year, which were evidently monthly contributions. Now I am emancipated, I feel as if I had a thousand Essays swelling within me. False feelings both!

Your ex-Lampoonist, or Lamb-punnist, from Enfield, October 24, or "last day but one for receiving articles that can be inserted."

LETTER CCCCXV

February 1832.

DEAR MOXON—The snows are ancle-deep, slush, and mire, that 't is hard to get to the post-office, and cruel to send the maid out. 'T is a slough of despair, or I should sooner have thanked you for your offer of the "*Life*," which we shall very much like to have, and will return duly. I do not know when I shall be in town, but in a week or two, at farthest, when I will come as far as you, if I can. We are moped to death with confinement within doors. I send you a curiosity of G. Dyer's tender conscience. Between thirty and forty years

since, G. published the "Poet's Fate," in which were two very harmless lines about Mr. Rogers; but Mr. R. not quite approving of them, they were left out in a subsequent edition, 1801. But G. has been worrying about them ever since; if I have heard him once, I have heard him a hundred times, express a remorse proportioned to a consciousness of having been guilty of an atrocious libel. As the devil would have it, a fool they call Barker, in his "Parriana," has quoted the identical two lines, as they stood in some obscure edition anterior to 1801, and the withers of poor G. are again wrung. His letter is a gem; with his poor blind eyes it has been laboured out at six sittings. The history of the couplet is in page 3 of this irregular production, in which every variety of shape and size that letters can be twisted into is to be found. Do show *his* part of it to Mr. R. some day. If he has bowels, they must melt at the contrition so queerly charactered of a contrite sinner. G. was born, I verily think, without original sin, but chooses to have a conscience, as every Christian gentleman should have; his dear old face is insusceptible of the twist they call a sneer, yet he is apprehensive of being suspected of that ugly appearance. When he makes a compliment, he thinks he has given an affront,—a name is personality. But show (no hurry) this unique recantation to Mr. R.,—'tis like a dirty pocket-handkerchief, mucked with tears of some indigent Magdalen. There is the impress of sincerity in every pot-hook and hanger; and then the gilt frame to

such a pauper picture! It should go into the Museum. I am heartily sorry my Devil does not answer. We must try it a little longer; and, after all, I think I must insist on taking a portion of its loss upon myself. It is too much you should lose by two adventures. You do not say how your general business goes on, and I should very much like to talk over it with you here.

Come when the weather will possibly let you; I want to see the Wordsworths, but I do not much like to be all night away. It is dull enough to be here together, but it is duller to leave Mary; in short, it is painful, and in a flying visit I should hardly catch them. I have no beds for them if they came down, and but a sort of a house to receive them in; yet I shall regret their departure unseen; I feel cramped and straitened every way. Where are they?

We have heard from Emma but once, and that a month ago, and are very anxious for another letter.

You say we have forgot your powers of being serviceable to us. *That* we never shall: I do not know what I should do without you when I want a little commission. Now then: there are left at Miss Buffam's, the "Tales of the Castle," and certain volumes of the "Retrospective Review." The first should be conveyed to Novello's, and the Reviews should be taken to Talfourd's office, ground-floor, East side, Elm Court, Middle Temple, to whom I should have written, but my spirits are wretched; it is quite an effort to write this. So, with the "*Life*," I have cut

you out three pieces of service. What can I do for you here, but hope to see you very soon, and think of you with most kindness? I fear to-morrow, between rains and snows, it would be impossible to expect you, but do not let a practicable Sunday pass. We are always at home.

Mary joins in remembrances to your sister, whom we hope to see in any fine-ish weather, when she 'll venture.

Remember us to Allsop, and all the dead people; to whom, and to London, we seem dead.

LETTER CCCCXVI

TO W. S. LANDOR

April 9, 1832.

DEAR SIR—Pray accept a little volume. 'T is a legacy from Elia, you 'll see. Silver and gold had he none, but such as he had left he you. I do not know how to thank you for attending to my request about the Album. I thought you would never remember it. Are not you proud and thankful, Emma? *Yes; very, both.*

[Signed] EMMA ISOLA.

Many things I had to say to you, which there was not time for. One, why should I forget? 't is for Rose Aylmer, which has a charm I cannot explain. I lived upon it for weeks. Next, I forgot to tell you I knew all your Welsh annoyances, the measureless B.'s. I

knew a quarter of a mile of them. Seventeen brothers and sixteen sisters, as they appear to me in memory. There was one of them that used to fix his long legs on my fender, and tell a tale of a shark every night, endless, immortal. How have I grudged the salt-sea ravener not having had his gorge of him! The shortest of the daughters measured five foot eleven without her shoes. Well, some day we may confer about them. But they were tall. Truly, I have discover'd the longitude. Sir, if you can spare a moment, I should be happy to hear from you. That rogue Robinson detained your verses till I call'd for them. Don't entrust a bit of prose to the rogue; but believe me,

Your obliged, C. L.

W. S. Landor, Esq.

LETTER CCCCXVII

TO SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

April 14, 1832.

MY DEAR COLERIDGE — Not an unkind thought has passed in my brain about you; but I have been wofully neglectful of you; so that I do not deserve to announce to you, that if I do not hear from you before then, I will set out on Wednesday morning to take you by the hand. I would do it this moment, but an unexpected visit might flurry you. I shall take silence for acquiescence, and come. I am glad you could write so long a letter. Old loves to,

and hope of kind looks from, the Gillmans when I come.

Yours, *semper idem*, C. L.

If you ever thought an offence, much more wrote it, against me, it must have been in the times of Noah, and the great waters swept it away. Mary's most kind love, and maybe a wrong prophet of your bodings!—here she is crying for mere love over your letter. I wring out less, but not sincerer showers.

My direction is simply, Enfield.

LETTER CCCCXVIII

TO MR. MOXON

[*1832.*]

THANK you for the books. I am ashamed to take tithe thus of your press. I am worse to a publisher than the two Universities and the British Museum. A. C. I will forthwith read. B. C. (I can't get out of the A, B, C) I have more than read. Taken altogether, 't is too Lovey; but what delicacies! I like most "King Death"; glorious 'bove all, "The Lady with the Hundred Rings"; "The Owl"; "Epistle to What's his Name" (here, may be, I'm partial); "Sit down, Sad Soul"; "The Pauper's Jubilee" (but that's old, and yet 't is never old); "The Falcon"; "Felon's Wife"; damn "Madame Pasty" (but that is borrowed);

Apple-pie is very good,
And so is apple-pasty;

But ——
O Lord! 't is very nasty:

but chiefly the dramatic fragments,—scarce three of which should have escaped my specimens, had an antique name been prefixed. They exceed his first. So much for the nonsense of poetry; now to the serious business of life. Up a court (Blandford Court) in Pall Mall (exactly at the back of Marlborough House), with iron gate in front, and containing two houses, at No. 2, did lately live Leishman, my tailor. He is moved somewhere in the neighbourhood; devil knows where. Pray find him out, and give him the opposite. I am so much better, though my head shakes in writing it, that, after next Sunday, I can well see Forster and you. Can you throw B. C. in? Why tarry the wheels of my "Hogarth"?

CHARLES LAMB.

LETTER CCCCXIX

TO LOUISA BADAMS

December 31, 1832.

DEAR MRS. B. — Mary has not enterprise enough to venture on a *journey* at this dreary time of the year, and 't is too uncomfortable for us to leave her, for a night even, to the discourteous hospitalities of old frosty Westwood and his thin spouse: types of Christmas turned sour, or the 1st of January born with teeth and wrinkles. Cordial Ill-comes, Not Welcomes—"wretched New Years to

you": Discompliments of the Season. Spring, and we, will lure her out some fine April day. Instead pray accept of our kindest congratulations.

Besides, I have been not a little disconcerted.

On the night of our murder (an hour or two before it), the maid being busy, I went out to order an additional pint of porter for Moxon who had surprised us with a late visit. Now I never go out quite disinterested upon such occasions. And I begged a half-pint of ale at the bar which our sweet-faced landlady good-humouredly complied with, asking me into the parlour, but a side door was just open that disclosed a more cheerful blaze, and I entered where four people were engaged over Dominoes. One of them, Fare, invited me to join in it, partly out of impudence, I believe; however, not to balk a Christmas frolic, I complied, and played with Danby, but soon gave over, having forgot the game. I was surprised with D. challenging me as having known me in the Temple. He must have been a child then. I did not recognise him, but perfectly remembered his father, who was a hairdresser in the Temple. This was all that passed, as I went away with my beer. Judge my surprise when the next morning I was summoned before Dr. Creswell to say what I knew of the transaction. My examination was conducted with all delicacy, and of course I was soon dismissed. I was afraid of getting into the papers, but I was pleased to find myself only noticed as a "gentleman whose name we could not

gather." Poor D.! the few words I spoke to him were to remind him of a trick Jem White played upon his father. The boy was too young to know anything about it. In the *Morning Post* appeared this paragraph: "Yesterday morning, Mr. Danby, the respectable Hairdresser in Pump Court in the Temple, in a fit of delirium threw himself out of a 2 pair stairs window, looking into the passage that leads to Fig-tree Court, and his head was literally smashed to atoms." White went to D.'s to see how it operated, and found D. quietly weaving wigs, and the shop full of lawyers that had come to enquire particulars. D. was a man much respected. Indeed hairdressers in the Inns of Court are a superior race of tradesmen. They generally leave off rich, as D. did. Well, poor D. had never heard the story or probably forgotten it—and his company looking on me a little suspiciously, as they do at alehouses when a rather better drest person than themselves attempts to join 'em—(it never answers,—at least it seemed so to me when I heard of the murder)—I went away. One often fancies things afterwards that did not perhaps strike one at the time. However, after all, I have felt queer ever since. It has almost sickened me of the Crown and Horseshoe, and I sha'n't hastily go into the taproom again. I have made a long letter and can just say good-bye,

C. Lamb.

Mrs. Badams,
11 Old Church Street,
Paddington.

LETTER CCCCXX

TO MR. SERJEANT TALFOURD

February 1833.

MY DEAR T.—Now cannot I call him *Serjeant;* what is there in a coif? Those canvas sleeves protective from ink, when he was a law-chit—a *Chitty*-ling (let the leathern apron be apocryphal), do more 'specially plead to the Jury Court, of old memory. The costume (will he agnise it?) was as of a desk-fellow, or Socius Plutei. Methought I spied a brother!

That familiarity is extinct for ever. Curse me if I can call him Mr. Serjeant—except, mark me, in *company.* Honour where honour is due; but should he ever visit us (do you think he ever will, Mary?), what a distinction should I keep up between him and our less fortunate friend, H. C. R.! Decent respect shall always be the Crabb's—but, somehow, short of reverence.

Well, of my old friends, I have lived to see two knighted, one made a judge, another in a fair way to it. Why am I restive? why stands my sun upon Gibeon?

Variously, my dear Mrs. Talfourd (I can be more familiar with her!), Mrs. *Serjeant* Talfourd,—my sister prompts me—(these ladies stand upon ceremonies)—has the congratulable news affected the members of our small community. Mary comprehended it at once, and entered into it heartily. Mrs.

Westwood was, as usual, perverse; would n't, or could n't, understand it. A Serjeant? She thought Mr. T. was in the law. Did n't know that he ever 'listed.

Emma alone truly sympathised. *She* had a silk gown come home that very day, and has precedence before her learned sisters accordingly.

We are going to drink the health of Mr. and Mrs. Serjeant, with all the young serjeantry; and that is all that I can see that I shall get by the promotion.

Valete, et mementote amici quondam vestri humillimi. C. L.

LETTER CCCCXXI

TO MR. MOXON

February 10, 1833.

I WISH you would omit "by the Author of Elia" now, in advertising that damn'd "Devil's Wedding." I had sneaking hopes you would have dropt in to-day, 't is my poor birthday. Don't stay away so. Give Forster a hint. You are to bring your brother some day—*sisters* in better weather. Pray give me one line to say if you receiv'd and forwarded Emma's pacquet to Miss Adams—and how Dover Street looks. Adieu. Is there no Blackwood this month? What separation will there be between the Friend's preface and THE ESSAYS? Should not "Last Essays," etc. etc., head them? If 't is too late, don't mind. I don't care a farthing about it.

Mr. Moxon.

LETTER CCCCXXII

TO LOUISA BADAMS

February 15, 1833.

DEAR Mrs. B.—Thanks for your remembrance of your old fellow-prisoners at murderous Enfield. By the way, Cooper, who turned King's evidence, is come back again whitewash'd, has resumed his seat at chapel, and took his sister (a fact!) up the Holt White's lane to shew her the topography of the deed. I intend asking him to supper. They say he is pleasant in conversation. Will you come and meet him?

I don't know how we shall see you. Mary has objections to travelling, and I never stay out the night when I come up. Could n't Badams and you make a 24 hours' day here? The room is vacant at the Horseshoe where Fare slept last, unless you prefer Johnson's last bed.

Mary, Emma, and I have got thro' the *Inferno* with the help of Cary—and Mary is in for it. She is commencing Tasso. When the Spring is riper, we will spare Emma for a few days, if you 'll be kind to her.

Triple loves and kind memory to you both.

C. L.

LETTER CCCCXXIII

TO WILLIAM HONE

March 6, 1833.

DEAR FRIEND—Thee hast sent a Christian epistle to me, and I should not feel dear if I neglected to reply to it, which would have been sooner if that vain young man, to whom thou didst intrust it, had not kept it back. We should rejoice to see thy outward man here, especially on a day which should not be a first day, being liable to worldly callers-in on that day. Our little book is delayed by a heathenish injunction, threatened by the man Taylor. Canst thou copy and send, or bring with thee, a vanity in verse which in my younger days I wrote on friend Aders's pictures? Thou wilt find it in the book called the *Table Book*.

Tryphena and Tryphosa, whom the world calleth Mary and Emma, greet you with me.

CH. LAMB.

6th of 3rd month, 4th day.

W. Hone, Esq.,
Grasshopper Hotel,
Gracechurch Street.

LETTER CCCCXXIV

TO MR. MOXON

March 19, 1833.

I SHALL expect Forster and two Moxons on Sunday, and hope for Procter. I am obliged to

be in town next Monday. Could we contrive to make a party (paying or not is immaterial) for Miss Kelly's that night; and can you shelter us after the play—I mean Emma and me. I fear I cannot persuade Mary to join us.

N. B.—I can sleep at a public house. Send an Elia (mind I *insist* on buying it), to T. Manning, Esq., at Sir G. Tuthill's, Cavendish Square. Do write.

E. Moxon.

LETTER CCCCXXV

April 27, 1833.

DEAR M.—Mary and I are very poorly. We have had a sick child, who, sleeping or not sleeping, next me, with a pasteboard partition between, killed my sleep. The little bastard is gone. My bedfellows are cough and cramp; we sleep three in a bed. Domestic arrangements (baker, butcher, and all) devolve on Mary. Don't come yet to this house of pest and age! We propose, when you and E. agree on the time, to come up and meet you at the B——'s, say a week hence, but do you make the appointment.

Mind, our spirits are good, and we are happy in your happinesses. C. L.

Our old and ever loves to dear Emma.

LETTER CCCCXXVI

TO MRS. HAZLITT

Mr. Walden's, Church Street,
Edmonton, May 31, 1833.

DEAR Mrs. Hazlitt—I will assuredly come and find you out when I am better. I am driven from house to house by Mary's illness. I took a sudden resolution to take my sister to Edmonton, where she was under medical treatment last time, and have arranged to board and lodge with the people. Thank God, I have repudiated Enfield. I have got out of hell, despair of heaven, and must sit down contented in a half-way purgatory. Thus ends this strange eventful history. But I am nearer town, and will get up to you somehow before long.

I repent not of my resolution. 'T is late, and my hand is unsteady; so good-bye till we meet,

Your old C. L.

Mrs. Hazlitt,
No. 4, Palace Street, Pimlico.

LETTER CCCCXXVII

TO WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

[End of May nearly] 1833.

DEAR Wordsworth—Your letter, save in what respects your dear sister's health, cheered me in my new solitude. Mary is ill again. Her illnesses

encroach yearly. The last was three months, followed by two of depression most dreadful. I look back upon her earlier attacks with longing: nice little durations of six weeks or so, followed by complete restoration,—shocking as they were to me then. In short, half her life she is dead to me, and the other half is made anxious with fears and lookings forward to the next shock. With such prospects, it seemed to me necessary that she should no longer live with me, and be fluttered with continued removals; so I am come to live with her, at a Mr. Walden's and his wife, who take in patients, and have arranged to lodge and board us only. They have had the care of her before. I see little of her: alas! I too often hear her. *Sunt lachrymæ rerum!* and you and I must bear it.

To lay a little more load on it, a circumstance has happened, *cujus pars magna fui*, and which, at another crisis, I should have more rejoiced in. I am about to lose my old and only walk-companion, whose mirthful spirits were the "youth of our house," Emma Isola. I have her here now for a little while, but she is too nervous, properly to be under such a roof, so she will make short visits,—be no more an inmate. With my perfect approval, and more than concurrence, she is to be wedded to Moxon, at the end of August—so "perish the roses and the flowers"—how is it?

Now to the brighter side. I am emancipated from the Westwoods, and I am with attentive people,

and younger. I am three or four miles nearer the great city; coaches half-price less, and going always, of which I will avail myself. I have few friends left there, one or two though, most beloved. But London streets and faces cheer me inexpressibly, though not one known of the latter were remaining.

Thank you for your cordial reception of "Elia." *Inter nos*, the *Ariadne* is not a darling with me; several incongruous things are in it, but in the composition it served me as illustrative.

I want you in the "Popular Fallacies" to like the "Home that is no home," and "Rising with the lark."

I am feeble, but cheerful in this my genial hot weather. Walked sixteen miles yesterday. I can't read much in summer time.

With my kindest love to all, and prayers for dear Dorothy,

I remain most affectionately yours, C. Lamb.

At Mr. Walden's, Church Street, Edmonton, Middlesex.

Moxon has introduced Emma to Rogers, and he smiles upon the project. I have given E. my Milton (will you pardon me) in part of a *portion*. It hangs famously in his Murray-like shop.

LETTER CCCCXXVIII

TO MR. MOXON

May 1833.

DEAR M.—A thousand thanks for your punctualities. What a cheap book is the last Hogarth you sent me! I am pleased now that Hunt *diddled* me out of the old one. Speaking of this, only think of the new farmer with his thirty acres. There is a portion of land in Lambeth Parish, called Knave's Acre. I wonder he overlook'd it. Don't show this to the firm of D—— and Co. I next want one copy of *Leicester's School*, and wish you to pay Leishman, Taylor, 2, Blandford Place, Pall Mall, opposite the British Institution, £6: 10s., for coat and waistcoat, etc. etc., and I vehemently thirst for the fourth No. of Nichols's Hogarth, to bind one up (the two books) as Hogarth and Supplement. But as you know the price, don't stay for its appearance; but come as soon as ever you can with your bill of all demands in full, and as I have none but £5 notes, bring with you sufficient change. Weather is beautiful. I grieve sadly for Miss Wordsworth. We are all well again. Emma is with us, and we all shall be glad of a sight of you. Come on Sunday if you *can*, better if you come before.

Perhaps Rogers would smile at this. A pert, half chemist, half apothecary in our town who smatters of literature, and is immeasurably unlettered, said to me, "Pray, sir, may not Hood be reckon'd the

Prince of Wits in the present day?" To which I assenting, he adds, "I had always thought that Rogers had been reckon'd the Prince of Wits, but I suppose that now Mr. Hood has the better title to that appellation." To which I replied, that Mr. R. had wit with much better qualities, but did not aspire to the principality. He had taken all the puns manufactured in John Bull for our friend, in sad and stupid earnest. One more *Album Verses*, please. Adieu.

C. L.

LETTER CCCCXXIX

TO THOMAS ALLSOP

July 1833.

MY DEAR ALLSOP—I think it will be impossible for us to come to Highgate in the time you propose. We have friends coming to-morrow, who may stay the week; and we are in a bustle about Emma's leaving us—so we will put off the hope of seeing Mrs. Allsop till we come to Town, after Emma's going, which is in a fortnight and a half, when we mean to spend a time in Town, but shall be happy to see you on Sunday, or any day.

In haste. Hope our little Porter does.

Yours ever, C. L.

LETTER CCCCXXX

TO MR. MOXON

July 24, 1833.

FOR God's sake give Emma no more watches; *one* has turned her head. She is arrogant and insulting. She said something very unpleasant to our old clock in the passage, as if he did not keep time, and yet he had made her no appointment. She takes it out every instant to look at the moment-hand. She lugs us out into the fields, because there the bird-boys ask you, "Pray, sir, can you tell us what 's o'clock?" and she answers them punctually. She loses all her time looking to see "what the time is." I overheard her whispering, "Just so many hours, minutes, etc., to Tuesday; I think St. George's goes too slow." This little present of Time!—why,—'t is Eternity to her!

What can make her so fond of a gingerbread watch?

She has spoiled some of the movements. Between ourselves, she has kissed away "half-past twelve," which I suppose to be the canonical hour in Hanover Square.

Well, if "love me, love my watch" answers, she will keep time to you.

It goes right by the Horse Guards.

Dearest M.—Never mind opposite nonsense. She does not love you for the watch, but the watch for you. I will be at the wedding, and keep the 30th

July, as long as my poor months last me, as a festival, gloriously.

Yours ever, ELIA.

We have not heard from Cambridge. I will write the moment we do.

Edmonton, 24th July, twenty minutes past three by Emma's watch.

LETTER CCCCXXXI

[*1833.*]

DEAR M.—Many thanks for the books; but most thanks for one immortal sentence: "If I do not *cheat* him, never *trust* me again." I do not know whether to admire most, the wit or justness of the sentiment. It has my cordial approbation. My sense of *meum* and *tuum* applauds it. I maintain it, the eighth commandment hath a secret special reservation, by which the reptile is exempt from any protection from it. As a dog, or a nigger, he is not a holder of property. Not a ninth of what he detains from the world is his own. "Keep your hands from picking and stealing," is no ways referable to his acquists. I doubt whether bearing false witness against thy neighbour at all contemplated this possible scrub. Could Moses have seen the speck in vision? An *ex post facto* law alone could relieve him; and we are taught to expect no eleventh commandment. The outlaw to the Mosaic dispensation!—unworthy to have seen Moses behind!—to lay his

desecrating hands upon Elia! Has the irreverent ark-toucher been struck blind, I wonder? The more I think of him, the less I think of him. His meanness is invisible with aid of solar microscope. My moral eye smarts at him. The less flea that bites little fleas! The great BEAST! The beggarly NIT!

More when we meet; mind, you 'll come, two of you; and could n't you go off in the morning, that we may have a day-long curse at him, if curses are not dis-hallowed by descending so low! Amen. Maledicatur in extremis! C. L.

LETTER CCCCXXXII

TO LOUISA BADAMS

August 20, 1833.

DEAR MRS. BADAMS—I was at church as the grave Father, and behaved tolerably well, except at first entrance when Emma in a whisper repressed a nascent giggle. I am not fit for weddings or burials. Both incite a chuckle. Emma looked as pretty as Pamela, and made her responses delicately and firmly. I tripped a little at the altar, was engaged in admiring the altar-piece, but, recalled seasonably by a Parsonic rebuke, "Who gives this woman?" was in time resolutely to reply "I do." Upon the whole the thing went off decently and devoutly. Your dodging post is excellent; I take it, it was at Wilsdon. We shall this week or next dine at Islington. I am writing to know the day, and in that case see you the

next day and talk of beds. *My* lodging may be on the cold floor. I long for a *hard fought game* with Badams. With haste and thanks for your *unusually* entertaining letter, yours truly,

CHARLES AND MARY LAMB.

LETTER CCCCXXXIII

TO MR. AND MRS. MOXON

August 1833.

DEAR MR. AND MRS. MOXON—Time very short. I wrote to Miss Fryer, and had the sweetest letter about you, Emma, that ever friendship dictated. "I am full of good wishes, I am crying with good wishes," she says; but you shall see it.

DEAR MOXON—I take your writing most kindly, and shall, most kindly, your writing from Paris.

I want to crowd another letter to Miss Fryer into the little time after dinner, before post time. So with twenty thousand congratulations,

Yours, C. L.

I am calm, sober, happy. Turn over for the reason. I got home from Dover Street, by Evans, *half as sober as a judge.* I am turning over a new leaf, as I hope you will now.

[*The turn of the leaf presented the following from Miss Lamb:*]

MY DEAR EMMA AND EDWARD MOXON—Accept my sincere congratulations, and imagine more good

wishes than my weak nerves will let me put into good set words. The dreary blank of *unanswered questions* which I ventured to ask in vain was cleared up on the wedding-day by Mrs. W. taking a glass of wine, and, with a total change of countenance, begging leave to drink Mr. and Mrs. Moxon's health. It restored me from that moment, as if by an electrical stroke, to the entire possession of my senses. I never felt so calm and quiet after a similar illness as I do now. I feel as if all tears were wiped from my eyes, and all care from my heart.

MARY LAMB.

[*At the foot of this letter is the following by Charles:*]

Wednesday.

DEARS, again—Your letter interrupted a seventh game at picquet which *we* were having, after walking to Wright's and purchasing shoes. We pass our time in cards, walks, and reading. We attack Tasso soon. C. L.

Never was such a calm, or such a recovery. 'T is her own words undictated.

LETTER CCCCXXXIV

TO REV. H. F. CARY

September 9, 1833.

DEAR SIR—Your packet I have only just received, owing, I suppose, to the absence of Moxon, who is flaunting it about *à la Parisienne*,

with his new bride, our Emma, much to his satisfaction, and not a little to our dulness. We shall be quite well by the time you return from Worcestershire, and most, most (observe the repetition) glad to see you here, or anywhere.

I will take my time with Darley's act. I wish poets would write a little plainer; he begins some of his words with a letter which is unknown to the English typography.

Yours, most truly, C. Lamb.

P. S.—Pray let me know when you return. We are at Mr. Walden's, Church Street, Edmonton; no longer at Enfield. You will be amused to hear that my sister and I have, with the aid of Emma, scrambled through the "Inferno," by the blessed furtherance of your polar-star translation. I think we scarce left anything unmade-out. But our partner has left us, and we have not yet resumed. Mary's chief pride in it was that she should some day brag of it to you. Your *Dante* and Sandys' *Ovid* are the only helpmates of translations. Neither of you shirk a word.

Fairfax's *Tasso* is no translation at all. 'T is better in some places, but it merely observes the number of stanzas; as for images, similes, etc., he finds 'em himself, and never troubles Peter for the matter.

In haste, dear Cary, yours ever, C. Lamb.

Has M. sent you "Elia," second volume? If not he shall. Taylor and we are at law about it.

LETTER CCCCXXXV

TO MR. AND MRS. MOXON

November 29, 1833.

MARY is of opinion with me, that two of these sonnets are of a higher grade than any poetry you have done yet. The one to Emma is so pretty! I have only allowed myself to transpose a word in the third line. Sacred shall it be for any intermeddling of mine. But we jointly beg that you will make four lines in the room of the four last. Read "Darby and Joan," in Mrs. Moxon's first album. There you 'll see how beautiful in age the looking back to youthful years in an old couple is. But it is a violence to the feelings to anticipate that time in youth. I hope you and Emma will have many a quarrel and many a make-up (and she is beautiful in reconciliation!) before the dark days shall come, in which ye shall say "there is small comfort in them." You have begun a sort of character of Emma in them, very sweetly: carry it on, if you can, through the last lines.

I love the sonnet to my heart, and you *shall* finish it, and I 'll be damn'd if I furnish a line towards it. So much for that. The next best is to the Ocean.

> "Ye gallant winds, if e'er your LUSTY CHEEKS
> Blew longing lover to his mistress' side,
> O, puff your loudest, spread the canvas wide,"

is spirited. The last line I altered, and have re-altered

it as it stood. It is closer. These two are your best. But take a good deal of time in finishing the first. How proud should Emma be of her poets!

Perhaps "O Ocean" (though I like it) is too much of the open vowels which Pope objects to. "Great Ocean!" is obvious. To save sad thoughts I think is better (though not good) than for the mind to save herself. But 't is a noble sonnet. "St. Cloud" I have no fault to find with.

If I return the sonnets, think it no disrespect, for I look for a printed copy. You have done better than ever. And now for a reason I did not notice 'em earlier. On Wednesday they came, and on Wednesday I was a-gadding. Mary gave me a holiday, and I set off to Snow Hill. From Snow Hill I deliberately was marching down, with noble Holborn before me, framing in mental cogitation a map of the dear London in prospect, thinking to traverse Wardour Street, etc., when diabolically, I was interrupted by

> Heigh-ho!
> Little Barrow!—

(Emma knows him,) and prevailed on by him to spend the day (infinite loss!) at his sister's, a pawnbroker's in Gray's Inn Lane, where was an album, and (O march of intellect!) plenty of literary conversation, and more acquaintance with the state of modern poetry than I could keep up with. I was positively distanced. Knowles's play, which, epilogued by me, lay on the piano, alone made me hold up my

head. When I came home I read your letter, and glimpsed at your beautiful sonnet,

"Fair art thou as the morning, my young bride,"

and dwelt upon it in a confused brain, but determined not to open them till next day, being in a state not to be told of at Chatteris. Tell it not in Gath, Emma, lest the daughters triumph! I am at the end of my tether. I wish you would come on Tuesday with your fair bride. Why can't you? Do. We are thankful to your sister for being of the party. Come, and *bring* a sonnet on Mary's birthday. Love to the whole Moxonry, and tell E. I every day love her more, and miss her less. Tell her so, from her loving uncle, as she has let me call myself. I bought a fine embossed card yesterday, and wrote for the Pawnbrokeress's album. She is a Miss Brown, engaged to a Mr. White. One of the lines was (I forget the rest; but she had them at twenty-four hours' notice; she is going out to India with her husband)—

May your fame
And fortune, Frances, WHITEN with your name!

Not bad as a pun. I *will* expect you before two on Tuesday. I am well and happy, tell E.

TO ROGERS

LETTER CCCCXXXVI

TO MR. ROGERS

December 1833.

MY DEAR SIR—Your book, by the unremitting punctuality of your publisher, has reached me thus early. I have not opened it, nor will till to-morrow, when I promise myself a thorough reading of it. The "Pleasures of Memory" was the first school present I made to Mrs. Moxon; it has those nice woodcuts, and I believe she keeps it still. Believe me, that all the kindness you have shown to the husband of that excellent person seems done unto myself. I have tried my hand at a sonnet in the *Times;* but the turn I gave it, though I hoped it would not displease you, I thought might not be equally agreeable to your artist. I met that dear old man at poor Henry's, with you, and again at Cary's, and it was sublime to see him sit, deaf, and enjoy all that was going on in mirth with the company. He reposed upon the many graceful, many fantastic images he had created; with them he dined, and took wine. I have ventured at an antagonist copy of verses, in the *Athenæum*, to *him*, in which he is as everything, and you as nothing. He is no lawyer who cannot take two sides. But I am jealous of the combination of the sister arts. Let them sparkle apart. What injury (short of the theatres) did not Boydell's Shakspeare Gallery do me with Shakspeare? to have Opie's Shakspeare, Northcote's Shakspeare,

light-headed Fuseli's Shakspeare, heavy-headed Romney's Shakspeare, wooden-headed West's Shakspeare (though he did the best in Lear), deaf-headed Reynolds's Shakspeare, instead of my and everybody's Shakspeare; to be tied down to an authentic face of Juliet! to have Imogen's portrait; to confine the illimitable! I like you and Stothard (you best), but "out upon this half-faced fellowship!" Sir, when I have read the book, I may trouble you, through Moxon, with some faint criticisms. It is not the flatteringest compliment, in a letter to an author, to say you have not read his book yet. But the devil of a reader he must be who prances through it in five minutes; and no longer have I received the parcel. It was a little tantalising to me to receive a letter from Landor, *Gebir* Landor, from Florence, to say he was just sitting down to read my "Elia," just received; but the letter was to go out before the reading. There are calamities in authorship which only authors know. I am going to call on Moxon on Monday, if the throng of carriages in Dover Street, on the morn of publication, do not barricade me out.

With many thanks, and most respectful remembrances to your sister,

Yours, C. Lamb.

Have you seen Coleridge's happy exemplification in English of the Ovidian Elegiac metre?

TO MARY BETHAM

In the Hexameter rises the fountain's silvery current,
In the Pentameter aye falling in melody down.

My sister is papering up the book,—careful soul!

LETTER CCCCXXXVII

TO MARY BETHAM

January 24, 1834,
Church Street, Edmonton.

DEAR MARY BETHAM—I received the Bill, and when it is payable, some ten or twelve days hence, will punctually do with the overplus as you direct: I thought you would like to know it came to hand, so I have not waited for the uncertainty of when your nephew sets out. I suppose my receipt will serve, for poor Mary is not in a capacity to sign it. After being well from the end of July to the end of December, she was taken ill almost on the first day of the New Year, and is as bad as poor creature can be. I expect her fever to last 14 or 15 weeks—if she gets well at all, which every successive illness puts me in fear of. She has less and less strength to throw it off, and they leave a dreadful depression after them. She was quite comfortable a few weeks since, when Matilda came down here to see us.

You shall excuse a short letter, for my hand is unsteady. Indeed, the situation I am in with her shakes me sadly. She was quite able to appreciate the kind legacy while she was well. Imagine her

kindest love to you, which is but buried awhile, and believe all the good wishes for your restoration to health from C. Lamb.

Miss Mary Betham,
to the care of Sir Wm. Betham,
Record Tower, Dublin.

LETTER CCCCXXXVIII

TO MISS FRYER

February 14, 1834.

Dear Miss Fryer—Your letter found me just returned from keeping my birthday (pretty innocent!) at Dover Street. I see them pretty often. I have since had letters of business to write, or should have replied earlier. In one word, be less uneasy about me; I bear my privations very well; I am not in the depths of desolation, as heretofore. Your admonitions are not lost upon me. Your kindness has sunk into my heart. Have faith in me! It is no new thing for me to be left to my sister. When she is not violent, her rambling chat is better to me than the sense and sanity of this world. Her heart is obscured, not buried; it breaks out occasionally; and one can discern a strong mind struggling with the billows that have gone over it. I could be nowhere happier than under the same roof with her. Her memory is unnaturally strong; and from ages past, if we may so call the earliest records of our poor life, she fetches thousands of names and things

that never would have dawned upon me again, and thousands from the ten years she lived before me. What took place from early girlhood to her coming of age principally lives again (every important thing, and every trifle) in her brain, with the vividness of real presence. For twelve hours incessantly she will pour out without intermission all her past life, forgetting nothing, pouring out name after name to the Waldens, as a dream; sense and nonsense; truths and errors huddled together; a medley between inspiration and possession. What things we are! I know you will bear with me, talking of these things. It seems to ease me, for I have nobody to tell these things to now. Emma, I see, has got a harp! and is learning to play. She has framed her three Walton pictures, and pretty they look. That is a book you should read; such sweet religion in it, next to Woolman's, though the subject be baits, and hooks, and worms, and fishes. She has my copy at present, to do two more from.

Very, very tired! I began this epistle, having been epistolising all the morning, and very kindly would I end it, could I find adequate expressions to your kindness. We did set our minds on seeing you in Spring. One of us will indubitably. But I am not skilled in almanack learning to know when Spring precisely begins and ends. Pardon my blots; I am glad you like your book. I wish it had been half as worthy of your acceptance as John Woolman. But 't is a good-natured book.

LETTER CCCCXXXIX

TO WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

Church Street, Edmonton,
February 22, 1834.

DEAR WORDSWORTH—I write from a house of mourning. The oldest and best friends I have left are in trouble. A branch of them (and they of the best stock of God's creatures, I believe) is establishing a school at Carlisle; Her name is Louisa Martin; her address, 75, Castle Street, Carlisle; her qualities (and her motives for this exertion) are the most amiable, most upright. For thirty years she has been tried by me, and on her behaviour I would stake my soul. O, if you can recommend her, how would I love you—if I could love you better! Pray, pray, recommend her. She is as good a human creature,—next to my sister, perhaps, the most exemplary female I ever knew. Moxon tells me you would like a letter from me; you shall have one. *This* I cannot mingle up with any nonsense which you usually tolerate from C. Lamb. Need he add loves to wife, sister, and all? Poor Mary is ill again, after a short lucid interval of four or five months. In short, I may call her half dead to me. Good you are to me. Yours with fervour of friendship, for ever.

C. L.

If you want references, the Bishop of Carlisle may be one. Louisa's sister (as good as she, she cannot be

better, though she tries) educated the daughters of the late Earl of Carnarvon, and he settled a handsome annuity on her for life. In short, all the family are a sound rock.

LETTER CCCCXL

TO THOMAS MANNING

May 10, 1834.

YOU made me feel so funny, so happy-like; it was as if I was reading one of your old letters taken out at hazard any time between the last twenty years, 'twas so the same. The unity of place, a garden! The old Dramatis Personæ, a landlady and Daughter. The puns the same in mould. Will nothing change you? 'Tis but a short week since honest Ryal and I were lamenting the gone-by days of Manning and Whist. How savourily did he remember them! Might some great year but bring them back again! This was my exclaim, and R. did not ask for an explanation. I have had a scurvy nine years of it, and am now in the sorry fifth act. Twenty weeks nigh has she been now violent, with but a few sound months before, and these in such dejection that her fever might seem a relief to it. I tried to bring her to town in the winter once or twice, but it failed. Tuthill led me to expect that this illness would lengthen with her years, and it has cruelly—with that new feature of despondency after. I am with her alone now in a proper house. She is, I hope,

recovering. We play Picquet, and it is like the old times awhile, then goes off. I struggle to town rarely, and then to see London, with little other motive—for what is left there hardly? The streets and shops entertaining ever, else I feel as in a desert, and get me home to my cave. Save that once a month I pass a day, a gleam in my life, with Cary at the Museum (He is the flower of clergymen) and breakfast next morning with Robinson. I look to this as a treat. It sustains me. C. is a dear fellow, with but two vices, which in any less good than himself would be crimes past redemption. He has no relish for Parson Adams —hints that he might not be a very great Greek scholar after all (does Fielding hint that he was a Porson?)—and prefers "Ye shepherds so cheerful and gay," and "My banks they are furnished with bees," to "The Schoolmistress." I have not seen Wright's, but the faithfulness of C., Mary and I can attest. For last year, in a good interval, I giving some lessons to Emma, now Mrs. Moxon, in the *sense* part of her Italian (I knew no words), Mary pertinaciously undertook, being 69, to read the *Inferno* all thro' with the help of his Translation, and we got thro' it with Dictionaries and Grammars, of course to our satisfaction. Her perseverance was gigantic, almost painful. Her head was over her task, like a sucking bee, morn to night. We were beginning the *Purgatory*, but got on less rapidly, our great authority for grammar, Emma, being fled, but should have proceeded but for this misfortune. Do

not come to town without apprising me. We must all three meet somehow and "drink a cup."

Yours, C. L.

Mary strives and struggles to be content when she *is* well. Last year when we talked of being dull (we had just lost our seven-years-nearly inmate), and Cary's invitation came, she said, "Did not I say something or other would turn up?" In her first walk *out* of the house, she would read every Auction advertisement along the road, and when I would stop her she said, "These are *my* Play-bills." She felt glad to get into the world again, but then follows lowness. She is getting about tho', I very much hope. She is rising, and will claim her morning Picquet. I go to put this in the Post first. I walk 9 or 10 miles a day, alway up the road, dear Londonwards. Fields, flowers, birds, and green lanes, I have no heart for. The bare road is cheerful, and almost as good as a street. I saunter to the Red Lion duly, as you used to the Peacock.

T. Manning, Esq.,
Puckeridge, Herts.

LETTER CCCCXLI

TO REV. JAMES GILLMAN

Mr. Walden's, Church Street,
Edmonton, August 5, 1834.

MY DEAR SIR—The sad week being over, I must write to you to say that I was glad of being

spared from attending; I have no words to express my feeling with you all. I can only say that when you think a short visit from me would be acceptable, when your father and mother shall be able to see me *with comfort*, I will come to the bereaved house. Express to them my tenderest regards and hopes that they will continue our friends still. We both love and respect them as much as a human being can, and finally thank them with our hearts for what they have been to the poor departed.

God bless you all, C. LAMB.

LETTER CCCCXLII

TO REV. H. F. CARY

September 12, 1834.

"BY Cot's plessing we will not be absence at the grace."

DEAR C.—We long to see you, and hear account of your peregrinations, of the Tun at Heidelburg, the Clock at Strasburg, the statue at Rotterdam, the dainty Rhenish, and poignant Moselle wines, Westphalian hams, and Botargoes of Altona. But perhaps you have seen, not tasted any of these things.

Yours, very glad to chain you back again to your proper centre, books and Bibliothecæ,

C. AND M. LAMB.

I have only got your note just now *per negligentiam periniqui Moxoni.*

TO CHILDS

LETTER CCCCXLIII

TO MR. CHILDS

Monday. Church Street, Edmonton
(not Enfield, as you erroneously direct yours.) [*September 15, 1834.*]

DEAR SIR—The volume which you seem to want is not to be had for love or money. I with difficulty procured a copy for myself. Yours is gone to enlighten the tawny Hindoos. What a supreme felicity to the author (only he is no traveller) on the Ganges or Hydaspes (Indian streams) to meet a smutty Gentoo ready to burst with laughing at the tale of Bo-Bo! for doubtless it hath been translated into all the dialects of the East. I grieve the less, that Europe should want it. I cannot gather from your letter whether you are aware that a second series of the Essays is published by Moxon, in Dover Street, Piccadilly, called "The Last Essays of Elia," and, I am told, is not inferior to the former. Shall I order a copy for you? and will you accept it? Shall I *lend* you, at the same time, my sole copy of the former volume (Oh! return it) for a month or two? In return, you shall favour me with the loan of one of those Norfolk-bred grunters that you laud so highly; I promise not to keep it above a day. What a funny name Bungay is! I never dreamt of a correspondent thence. I used to think of it as some Utopian town, or borough in Gotham land. I now believe in its existence, as part of Merry England!

[*Here are some lines scratched out.*]

The part I have scratched out is the best of the letter. Let me have your commands.

CH. LAMB, *alias* ELIA.

LETTER CCCCXLIV

TO REV. H. F. CARY

[*October 1834.*]

I PROTEST I know not in what words to invest my sense of the shameful violation of hospitality which I was guilty of on that fatal Wednesday. Let it be blotted from the calendar. Had it been committed at a layman's house, say a merchant's or manufacturer's, a cheesemonger's or greengrocer's, or, to go higher, a barrister's, a member of Parliament's, a rich banker's, I should have felt alleviation, a drop of self-pity. But to be seen deliberately to go out of the house of a clergyman drunk! a clergyman of the Church of England too! not that alone, but of an expounder of that dark Italian Hierophant, an exposition little short of *his* who dared unfold the Apocalypse: divine riddles both; and, without supernal grace vouchsafed, Arks not to be fingered without present blasting to the touchers. And then, from what house! Not a common glebe or vicarage (which yet had been shameful), but from a kingly repository of sciences, human and divine, with the primate of England for its guardian, arrayed in public majesty, from which the profane vul-

gar are bid fly. Could all those volumes have taught me nothing better! With feverish eyes on the succeeding dawn I opened upon the faint light, enough to distinguish, in a strange chamber, not immediately to be recognised, garters, hose, waistcoat, neckerchief, arranged in dreadful order and proportion, which I knew was not mine own. 'T is the common symptom on awaking, I judge my last night's condition from. A tolerable scattering on the floor I hail as being too probably my own, and if the candlestick be not removed I assoil myself. But this finical arrangement, this finding everything in the morning in exact diametrical rectitude, torments me. By whom was I divested? Burning blushes! not by the fair hands of nymphs, the Buffam Graces? Remote whispers suggested that I *coached* it home in triumph. Far be that from working pride in me, for I was unconscious of the locomotion; that a young Mentor accompanied a reprobate old Telemachus; that, the Trojan-like, he bore his charge upon his shoulders, while the wretched incubus, in glimmering sense, hiccuped drunken snatches of flying on the bats' wings after sunset. An aged servitor was also hinted at, to make disgrace more complete, one, to whom my ignominy may offer further occasions of revolt (to which he was before too fondly inclining) from the true faith; for, at the sight of my helplessness, what more was needed to drive him to the advocacy of Independency? Occasion led me through Great Russell Street yesterday. I gazed at

the great knocker. My feeble hands in vain essayed to lift it. I dreaded that Argus Portitor, who doubtless lanterned me out on that prodigious night. I called the Elginian marbles. They were cold to my suit. I shall never again, I said, on the wide gates unfolding, say, without fear of thrusting back, in a light but peremptory air, "I am going to Mr. Cary's." I passed by the walls of Balclutha. I had imaged to myself a zodiac of third Wednesdays irradiating by glimpses the Edmonton dulness. I dreamed of Highmore! I am de-vited to come on Wednesdays. Villanous old age, that, with second childhood, brings linked hand in hand her inseparable twin, new inexperience, which knows not effects of liquor. Where I was to have sate for a sober, middle-aged-and-a-half gentleman, literary too, the neat fingered artist can educe no notions but of a dissolute Silenus, lecturing natural philosophy to a jeering Chromius, or a Mnasilus. Pudet. From the context gather the lost name of ——.

LETTER CCCCXLV

[*October 18, 1834.*]

DEAR SIR—The unbounded range of munificence presented to my choice, staggers me. What can twenty votes do for one hundred and two widows! I cast my eyes hopeless among the viduage. *N. B.*—Southey might be ashamed of himself to let his aged mother stand at the top of the list, with his £100 a year and butt of sack. Some-

times I sigh over No. 12, Mrs. Carve-ill, some poor relation of mine, no doubt. No. 15 has my wishes, but then she is a Welsh one. I have Ruth upon No. 21. I 'd tug hard for No. 24. No. 25 is an anomaly; there can be no Mrs. Hogg. No. 34 ensnares me. No. 73 should not have met so foolish a person. No. 92 may bob it as she likes, but she catches no cherry of me. So I have even fixed at haphazard, as you 'll see.

Yours, every third Wednesday, C. L.

LETTER CCCCXLVI

TO MRS. DYER

December 22, 1834.

DEAR Mrs. Dyer—I am very uneasy about a *Book*, which I either have lost or left at your house on Thursday. It was the book I went out to fetch from Miss Buffam's while the tripe was frying. It is called "Phillips's Theatrum Poetarum," but it is an English book. I think I left it in the parlour. It is Mr. Cary's book, and I would not lose it for the world. Pray, if you find it, book it at the Swan, Snow Hill, by an Edmonton stage immediately, directed to Mr. Lamb, Church Street, Edmonton, or write to say you cannot find it. I am quite anxious about it. If it is lost, I shall never like tripe again.

With kindest love to Mr. Dyer and all, yours truly, C. Lamb.

NOTES

NOTES

CHAPTER V—(*Continued*). [1827]

Letter CCCVIII.

Talfourd misdated this letter by a year, placing it in 1826. "Poor Norris" was Randal Norris, Sub-Treasurer of the Inner Temple, and one of the earliest and most loyal friends of Lamb and his parents. He died this month, and was buried in the Temple churchyard. Norris was connected through his wife with the Hertfordshire village of Widford, which Lamb knew so well. It adjoined Blakesware. It is worth noting that in the Second Series of *Elia*, published in Lamb's lifetime, in 1833, this letter to Talfourd, with a few variations and the substitution of changed initials for the real names, was included as an essay, under the title of "A Death Bed. In a Letter to R. H., Esq., of B——." In the essay, Norris appears as "N. R.": poor deaf Richard as "deaf Robert"; and Charley (Lamb himself) as "Jimmie." In the concluding sentences, a more explicit account is given of the family's necessities. "They are left almost provisionless. Some life assurance there is; but I fear not exceeding ———. Their hopes must be from your Corporation, which their father has served for fifty years."

The essay was withdrawn after the first edition of the Second Series. Probably the wife and daughters of Randal Norris objected (and not without reason) to have their family circumstances disclosed, under so very slender a disguise.

We 'll still make 'em run. The old song referred to is the original version of *Hearts of Oak*. It was published in the *Universal Magazine* for March 1760, entitled "A new Song, sung by Mr. Champness in *Harlequin's Invasion*."

> "They swear they 'll invade us, those terrible foes,
> They frighten our women, our children, and beaus;

But should their flat-bottoms in darkness get o'er,
Still Britons they 'll find to receive them on shore."

The song was written under the inspiration of the year (1759) of Pitt's greatest triumphs—the year of Minden and Quebec. See *Notes and Queries*, 7th series, vii. 18.

Letter CCCX.

This letter was clearly written for publication and appeared in Hone's *Table Book* (i. 3). It served as preface to the selections which thenceforth were given weekly.

Letter CCCXII.

The last Extract. See *Table Book*, i. 357. In the passage from Porter's "Two angry Women of Abingdon" the printer had given the line referred to—

"Blush forth golden hair and glorious red,"

ruining at once sense and metre.

Letter CCCXIII.

Your picture. Haydon's "Alexander," exhibited in the Royal Academy this year. See Haydon's *Diary*, ii. 149.

The *two lordlike Bucks* were, according to Haydon, who first printed this note of Lamb's, the Duke of Devonshire and Agar Ellis.

Letter CCCXIV.

This letter was addressed to Novello in the pages of Hone's *Table Book* (i. 514). It followed the publication (in the "Garrick" Series) of the beautiful lyric from George Peele's *Arraignment of Paris*, beginning—

"Fair and fair and twice so fair,
As fair as any may be."

Lamb headed his letter "To my esteemed friend and excellent musician, V. N., Esq."

NOTES

Letter CCCXV.

A correspondent in your last number. See *Table Book*, i. 803. This letter was signed "The Veiled Spirit." Lamb's reply appeared in the next number (ii. 10).

Letter CCCXVI.

This letter was first printed by me in its entirety from the original manuscript. The first paragraph, hitherto omitted, tells an amusing and characteristic story of Lamb and Thomas Hood.

The picture verses were some lines written by Lamb to accompany the gift to Barton of a coloured print, in a frame. The lines were afterwards published in his *Album Verses*, 1830, and will be found in my edition (*Poems, Plays, and Essays*).

Bernard Barton delighted to cover his walls with such pictures as he could afford, respecting which a pleasant passage will be found in Edward FitzGerald's *Memoir*. Lamb had somewhere picked up a coloured print representing a little boy learning to read at his mother's knee, and showing many obvious signs of childish obstinacy. For this picture Lamb had borrowed from Thomas Hood an old frame, considerably too large for it; but by carefully coating the superfluous margin of glass with cobbler's-wax, he and his friend Hood had succeeded in giving the whole a reputable appearance. It was on suggesting the use of this frame that Hood observed that Barton would be "sure to like it, because it was *broad-brimmed.*" In writing his verses Lamb, remembering the jest, ended as follows:—

> For the Frame—
> 'T is not ill-suited to the same;
> Oak-carved, not gilt, for fear of falling;
> Old-fashioned, plain, yet not appalling;
> And broad-brimmed, as the Owner's Calling.

The last line, Lamb here requests Bernard Barton to expunge.

When he printed the poem three years afterwards in *Album Verses*, he retained the line, but with a modification—

> And *sober*, as the Owner's Calling.

The print, in its ill-fitting frame, hung over the mantelpiece in the late Mrs. FitzGerald's (Lucy Barton's) drawing-room. The original manuscript, with the last line carefully erased with Barton's "best ivory-handled," is, by her generous kindness, in the possession of the editor. The picture has yet one more poetic association. It forms the subject of some pretty verses by Barton, in his *New Year's Eve, and other Poems*, 1828, entitled "Fireside Quatrains to Charles Lamb."

Letter CCCXVII.

In Hone's *Table Book* (ii. 55) appeared a sonnet of Lamb's addressed to Miss Kelly, "on her excellent Performance of Blindness in the revived opera of *Arthur and Emmeline*." Hence this letter.

Letter CCCXVIII.

First printed by Mr. P. G. Patmore in *My Friends and Acquaintance* (1854).

Dash was a dog that had been given to Lamb by Thomas Hood. Mr. Patmore has much to tell of this roving animal, who ultimately was transferred to Mr. Patmore's keeping. See *My Friends and Acquaintance*, vol. i. p. 29.

"*If he bring but a relict away,*
He is happy, nor heard to complain."

See Shenstone's Pastoral Ballad, "Absence"—

> "The pilgrim that journeys all day
> To visit some far-distant shrine,
> If he bear but a relique away
> Is happy, nor heard to repine."

Letter CCCXIX.

I am busy with a farce in two acts. The Intruding Widow, a dramatic poem founded on Mr. Crabbe's tale of *The Confidant*. See *Poems, Plays, and Essays*. Ultimately published in *Blackwood's Magazine*.

Letter CCCXX.

Sir John Stoddart, Chief-Justice at Malta. See Letter LXXXIX. in vol. x., and note.

Fearn's "Anti-Tooke." Anti-Tooke: or, an Analysis of Language. (London, 1824.)

Letter CCCXXI.

My engraving. The etching on copper by Brook Pulham.

I had my Blakesware. See Elia Essay, "Blakesmoor in Hertfordshire," and notes upon it, in this edition. The essay was first published in the *London Magazine*.

Letter CCCXXII.

The reference here is to Lamb's contributions to the *Table Book* of extracts from the Garrick plays. Hone felt deeply the kindness of Lamb and his sister during his struggling career. In dedicating to them his *Every-Day Book*, he says:—"How can I forget your and Miss Lamb's sympathy and kindness when glooms overmastered me, and that your pen sparkled in the book when my mind was in clouds and darkness. These 'trifles,' as each of you would call them, are benefits scored upon my heart."

Letter CCCXXIII.

Barton had been sending verses for Emma Isola's album. Respecting Mr. Fraser's projected album, see note to Letter CCCXXXVII.

"*Future Lord Byrons and sweet L. E. L.'s.*" This is a line from

some verses on albums, which have been attributed, I think on insufficient grounds, to Lamb himself.

My tragi-comedy. The Intruding Widow.

Your Drummonds. Lamb uses the name of one famous firm of bankers to indicate Barton's employers, the Alexanders.

En passant. I despair of interpreting Lamb's attempts at the French language. Talfourd, equally hopeless, omitted the last sentence, but I restore it from the original manuscript.

Letter CCCXXIV.

See *Table Book*, ii. 287, "Past, Present, and Future. Extemporaneous Lines, written to oblige a young Friend who suggested the Topic." Hone signed his own contributions with a *. In the poem occur these lines, to which Lamb specially refers:—

> "Time, that faithful tutor,
> Were I but teachable, might show the Future
> As the Present is; and yet I paint it
> Teeming with joy."

Letter CCCXXVII.

Mr. Watts. Alaric A. Watts, the editor of various albums and keepsakes.

"*Lord, what good hours do we keep!*"

—From a poem by Charles Cotton, quoted in the *Complete Angler.*

A feeble counter-action thro' the Table Book of last Saturday. We must suppose there had been some critical attacks upon Hood's "Plea of the Midsummer Fairies" (1827), for Lamb contributed to the *Table Book* a prose version of a portion of that poem, under the title, "The Defeat of Time: or a Tale of the Fairies" (*Table Book*, ii. 335). After paraphrasing the earlier part of the poem, Lamb breaks off with the following postscript:—"What particular endearments passed between

the Fairies and their Poet passes my pencil to delineate; but if you are curious to be informed, I must refer you, gentle reader, to the 'Plea of the Fairies,' a most agreeable poem lately put forth by my friend Thomas Hood; of the first half of which the above is nothing but a meagre and a harsh prose abstract. Farewell. (Elia.) *The words of Mercury are harsh after the songs of Apollo.*"

Letter CCCXXIX.

Mr. Moxon. The earliest mention, save in a letter of the June preceding, of one afterwards to be Lamb's friend and publisher, and the husband of Emma Isola. He was then a young man of six-and-twenty.

Letter CCCXXX.

Dash had been made over to the care of the Patmores, having been found by the Lambs "intractable and wild."

I've sent him two poems. One of these was the poem, "On an infant dying as soon as born," written at the request of Mrs. Hood on the death of her first child. See *Poems, Plays, and Essays.*

Letter CCCXXXIII.

This letter was first printed in Mrs. Mathews's Memoirs of her husband (iii. 596). It was there given *à propos* of the suggestion that had been made to Lamb, through Barron Field, that he should write an elaborate description of the pictures in Mathews's famous Theatrical Portrait Gallery.

An imitator of me. Rejected Articles was a collection of parodies of various prose writers, by Mr. P. G. Patmore (1826), one of the many *jeux d'esprit* suggested by the success of the more famous *Rejected Addresses.* The first article in the volume was a paper purporting to be by Elia, entitled "An Un-Sentimental

Journey." It was no more successful than many other attempts to imitate a style essentially inimitable.

Letter CCCXXXIV.

This letter is now for the first time printed as a whole. The original is in the possession of the family of my friend, Mr. George Loveday of Wardington, Banbury. Mr. Dodwell (it will be remembered) was a fellow-clerk of Lamb's in the India House. The names indicated by initials were other colleagues of Lamb and his correspondent.

Letter CCCXXXVII.

The kind "knitter in the sun!" Lamb is thinking of the line in *Twelfth Night*—

> "The spinsters and the knitters in the sun."

A Bijoux. So Lamb wrote, and French was not his strong point. The *Bijou* for 1828, published by Pickering, was edited by W. Fraser, afterwards editor of the *Foreign Quarterly Review*. Besides the Royal contributions referred to in Lamb's letter to Barton of 28th August 1827, the *Bijou* contained one of Lamb's ("Fresh clad from Heaven, an angel bright"); three poems of Coleridge's—"Youth and Age," "Work without Hope," "The Two Founts"; and here, moreover, was first printed Blanco White's immortal sonnet, beginning "Mysterious Night!"

Letter CCCXXXVIII.

Leigh Hunt would appear to have desired a portrait of Lamb, as one of certain projected illustrations for the work he had in preparation, *Lord Byron and some of his Contemporaries: with Recollections of the Author's Life and of his Visit to Italy.* 1828. The book ultimately appeared, however, without the portraits. Both the likenesses of Lamb, here mentioned, have been since

engraved. The one by Hazlitt "in a queer dress" represents Lamb in a nondescript costume, with a ruff.

Letter CCCXLI.

Your welcome present. The Widow's Tale, and Other Poems, by Bernard Barton, 1827. The author prefixes a note to the "Widow's Tale," stating that the incidents are taken from the painful but interesting "Account of the loss of five Wesleyan missionaries and others in the *Maria* mail-boat off the Island of Antigua, by Mrs. Jones, the only survivor on that mournful occasion." A woodcut on the title-page, representing three shipwrecked travellers *in extremis* on a raft at sea, is, as Lamb remarks, "a rueful *lignum mortis*." All the poems or passages indicated by Lamb with approval are given in the memorial volume on Barton already referred to. The "third stanza, at p. 108," that made Lamb long to see Van Balen, was from a poem describing a picture by that artist, representing some angel children leading up a lamb to the infant Saviour in His mother's lap. The stanza, containing a simile that Lamb thought exquisite, may well be quoted here. It is from the "Grandsire's Tale," in which the old man relates the early death of his grandchild:—

> "Though some might deem her pensive, if not sad,
> Yet those that knew her better, best could tell
> How calmly happy, and how meekly glad
> Her quiet heart in its own depths did dwell:
> Like to the waters of some crystal well,
> In which the stars of heaven at noon are seen,
> Fancy might deem on her young spirit fell
> Glimpses of light more glorious and serene
> Than that of life's brief day, so heavenly was her mien."

An artist who painted me lately. Henry Meyer, referred to in the letter to Leigh Hunt of November 1827.

NOTES

CHAPTER VI

1828—1834

Letter CCCXLIII.

Hunt's Lord B. Leigh Hunt's *Lord Byron and some of his Contemporaries*, etc. etc. 1828.

Hazlitt's speculative episodes. In his *Life of Napoleon Buonaparte*, four volumes. 1828.

The "Companion." One of Leigh Hunt's numerous ventures of the periodical sort. It began on January 9, and was discontinued on July 23, of this year 1828. A glance at the list of contents in Mr. Alexander Ireland's valuable Bibliography supports Lamb's complaint that there was too much in it of Madame Pasta. One article in the *Companion* was "Walks home by night in bad weather—Watchmen."

One Clarke a schoolmaster. The father of Cowden Clarke, the Rev. John Clarke, was a schoolmaster at Enfield. Keats, it will be remembered, was one of his pupils.

Holmes. Edward Holmes, author of the *Life of Mozart* and other musical works, was also at Mr. Clarke's school. He contributed at this time articles on musical subjects to the *Atlas* newspaper.

Victoria. Mary Victoria Novello, afterwards Mrs. Cowden Clarke. The Novellos lived for a while at Shacklewell Green, near Dalston. Cowden Clarke, it should be added, was in early life a teacher in his father's school, which explains Lamb's allusion to the "schoolmaster text hand."

Thurtell. Not the murderer, but his brother Thomas, who kept the Cock Tavern in the Haymarket.

Letter CCCXLIV.

The things which Pickering has. Certain verses of Lamb's of-

fered to Mr. Pickering for his *Bijou*, if not used, were promised to Thomas Hood, who was editing another annual called the *Gem*.

Letter CCCXLVI.

Mitford tells you of H.'s book. Lamb apparently refers to William Hazlitt's *Spirit of the Age; or, Contemporary Portraits*, published in 1825, in which his own was one of the Portraits sketched. See Letter to Bernard Barton of February 10, 1825.

The author of "May you like it?" The Rev. C. B. Tayler, the vicar of Hadleigh, Suffolk, Barton's neighbour and friend.

Letter CCCXLVIII.

Moxon was at this time with Mr. Hurst, the publisher, in St. Paul's Churchyard.

Poor John Scott's Second, on occasion of the duel with Christie in 1821, in which Scott was killed.

Letter CCCL.

In 1828 a project was formed for erecting a monument to Thomas Clarkson, on the hill above Wade's Mill on the Buntingford Road, in Hertfordshire, this being the spot where the resolution of devoting his life to the abolition of the Slave Trade first took possession of him. This was in Clarkson's lifetime, for he survived till 1846. The scheme was abandoned for the time, but has been revived and carried out within the last few years.

Upon a hillock at Forty Hill. Forty Hill is a district of Enfield.

Letter CCCLI.

Your Chairing the Member. One of two pictures that Haydon had just painted, the subjects taken from certain frolics that

he had witnessed when in the King's Bench Prison. The other was "The Mock Election," purchased for five hundred guineas by King George IV. "Chairing the Member" was exhibited by Haydon, with other of his pictures, in August of this year, at the Western Bazaar in Bond Street. "Besides the new picture, the Exhibition included 'Solomon,' 'Christ's Entry into Jerusalem,' and the drawings for the two prison pictures. 'The Mock Election' was not there, as it had before this been removed to Windsor." (*Tom Taylor's Life of B. R. Haydon.*)

Letter CCCLII.

The *Edition de Luxe* here spoken of as in preparation was published in 1830, with a Prefatory Memoir of Bunyan by Southey. It was illustrated by Martin, and published by Barton's friend, John Major. Macaulay's review of this edition will be remembered. His observations on Martin's unfitness for this kind of illustration bear a strong resemblance to Lamb's.

The Gem. The *Gem* for 1829 was edited by Thomas Hood. In the volume for that year appeared Lamb's verses "On an infant dying as soon as born," written at the request of Mrs. Hood, on the death of her infant child.

Letter CCCLIII.

The note which Lamb wrote to Hood, on discovering in the *Gem* the practical joke referred to in a letter to Procter of January 22, 1829. He indicates the temporary exchange of names by the opening and concluding words of his communication. Bridget, it will be remembered, is the name by which his sister is always described in the *Essays of Elia.*

Letter CCCLIV.

When you lurked at the Greyhound. Cowden Clarke and his bride spent their quiet honeymoon at the Inn at Enfield, as

Mrs. Cowden Clarke tells us. They were married on the 5th of July of this year.

Letter CCCLV.

The "Epithalamium" referred to in the former letter was, on second thoughts, despatched to Vincent Novello. Mrs. Cowden Clarke, who first printed this parody upon the school of Dryden in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for December 1873, dwells with just appreciation upon the admirable fooling of the entire letter.

Letter CCCLVI.

Laman Blanchard published this year a little volume of Poems, *Lyric Offerings*, dedicated to Lamb.

Letter CCCLVII.

Barton had sent Lamb his latest volume, *A New Year's Eve, and other Poems.* (London, 1828.) It was dedicated "to Charles Richard Sumner, Bishop of Winchester, in memorial of his courtesy and kindness" and had for frontispiece an engraving of a drawing by Martin, of Christ walking on the sea. Lamb, in applauding the picture, refers to certain strictures upon Martin contained in a previous letter to Barton. "Power and Gentleness, or the Cataract and the Streamlet," is perhaps as charming a lyric as Barton ever wrote. It contains the stanza about the streamlet, which was a favourite with that admirable judge, Edward FitzGerald:—

> "More gaily now it sweeps
> By the small schoolhouse, in the sunshine bright;
> And o'er the pebbles leaps
> Like happy hearts by holiday made light."

The full title of the "Lady Russell" poem was, "Lady Rachel Russell: or, a Roman Hero and an English Heroine compared." The "stanzas to 'Chalon'" were "On a Portrait by A. E.

Chalon, R. A."—the portrait being one of Clarkson, the Abolitionist.

As Sh—— says of Religion. It is hardly necessary to point out that the allusion is to Hamlet's—

> "And fair Religion make
> A rhapsody of words."

I much like the "Heron." "Syr Heron. Inscribed to my ingenious friend, John Major, on receiving from him a seal bearing the impress of that bird."

"*Fludyer.*" "To Sir Samuel Fludyer, on the devastation effected on his Marine Villa at Felixstowe by the encroachments of the Sea." The answer to the enigma is clearly, as Mrs. Fitz-Gerald has pointed out to me, *an auctioneer's hammer.*

Letter CCCLX.

As Procter had tried a practical joke upon Lamb, the latter seems to have thought it a good opportunity to return the compliment. In the details that follow, concerning the case that "fretted him to death," the element of truth was that John Lamb had, shortly before his death, married a widow, who had a married daughter, Elizabeth Dowden. This, I have ascertained, was a fact. Lamb, as his brother's executor, had some trouble in administering the estate; but the elaborate and impossible farrago of details here built upon the simple foundation is, of course, the wildest nonsense. The serious reference to the 170th chapter of "Fearne's Contingent Remainders" (a classic work, divided, I believe, into some dozen or fifteen chapters) is delightfully conceived. Talfourd adds that the alleged coolness between Lamb and his legal friends was part of the fiction.

A few lines of verse for a young friend's album. It was for Emma Isola's album that the verses were asked.

Barry C—— is Barry Cornwall, Mr. Procter's poetical "Alias."

NOTES

Letter CCCLXI.

I have revised previous texts of this letter from the original in Mrs. Procter's possession, and restored one or two characteristic sentences hitherto omitted.

The anti-Capulets. The Montagus (Basil Montagu and his wife).

Miss Holcroft. Louisa Holcroft, daughter of the dramatist, married Mr. Badams, Carlyle's friend. See Carlyle's *Reminiscences.*

Burke's case. Burke and Hare, the Edinburgh resurrection men. Burke was hanged on the 28th of this January. "A shot" was explained in evidence to be a slang word used by the gang for a "subject to be murdered."

A sonnet of mine. "The Gipsy's Malison." See the next letter to Procter, in which the sonnet is given.

'T was written for the "Gem." Edited this year by Hood.

They published the "Widow" instead. The "Widow" was a short essay, accompanying a steel engraving of a sentimental picture by Leslie, of a kind common in annuals and keepsakes, bearing the same title. Hood wrote this paper in imitation of Lamb's style, and boldly appended to it the signature, "C. Lamb." The imitation is only tolerably successful. It opens thus:—

A Widow

hath always been a mark for mockery—a standing butt for wit to level at. Jest after jest hath been huddled upon her close cap, and stuck, like burrs, upon her weeds. Her sables are a perpetual "Black Joke."

Satirists—prose and verse—have made merry with her bereavements. She is a stock character on the stage. Farce bottleth up her crocodile tears, or labelleth her empty lachrymatories. Comedy mocketh her precocious flirtations, and twitteth her with "the funeral baked meats coldly furnishing forth the marriage tables."

I confess, when I called the other day on my kinswoman G.—then in the second week of her widowhood—and saw her sitting, her young

boy by her side, in her recent sables, I felt unable to reconcile her estate with any risible associations. The lady with a skeleton moiety—in the old print in Bowles's old shop-window—seemed but a type of her condition, etc. etc.

Letter CCCLXII.

See preceding letter to Procter, of 22nd January.

Abactor, we may conclude, is the Latin equivalent for sheep-stealer given in Ainsworth's *Dictionary*.

Letter CCCLXIII.

Mr. Procter was a solicitor, "incipient," but not precisely a "conveyancer."

O thou above the Painter. James Barry, the historical painter.

Giraldus Cambrensis, the historian, otherwise known as Giraldus de *Barri*.

Thy most ingenious and golden cadences. The verses that Procter had sent for Emma Isola's album, in reply to Lamb's invitation. They turned upon the coincidence of the young lady's name with that of the lovely island in the Lago Maggiore, so well known to all sojourners at Baveno. The lines ended—

"Isola Bella, whom all poets love!"

The "fairest hands in Cambridge" were Emma Isola's, who had many friends in the University town. She was then preparing to accept a situation as governess in the family of Mr. Williams, Rector of Fornham, near Bury St. Edmunds.

Unsphinx this riddle for me. It is perhaps impertinent to point out that the flippant allusions that follow are to the disastrous family history of one who had dealings with a notable propounder of riddles.

Letter CCCLXIV.

I append a translation:—

"Most eloquent Poet! although epithets of that sort, I am well aware, apply to orators rather than poets—for all that, most eloquent!

"There has been now for some time staying with us in the Enfield country a future attorney, the most illustrious Martin Burney, who is taking his holiday—escaped, for a while, from business so called, and an office without clients. He begs and implores you (Martin does, I mean), if by blessed fortune a tardy client should turn up in his absence, that you will let him know by letter addressed here. Do you understand? or ought I to write in a tongue so barbarous as English to you, prince of scholars? C. Lamb.

"If an estate in freehold is granted to a grandfather, and if in the same deed it is granted mediately or immediately to the heir or heirs of the body of the said grandfather, these last are words of Limitation, not Perquisition. This is my ruling."

The postscript to this letter is supplementary to the legal fiction elaborated in the previous letter of 19th January.

Letter CCCLXV.

Astrea. D'Urfé's famous Pastoral Romance.

Inconstant, yet fair. This sentence and the following sum up, with exquisite skill, the euphuistic style of Sidney's *Arcadia.*

Cowden with the Tuft. A description formed from analogy with the hero of the fairy tale, *Riquet with the Tuft.* Mr. Clarke, as his wife informs us, had a bald head fringed with rather demonstrative tufts of hair.

Letter CCCLXVI.

Talfourd tells us that Crabb Robinson sent Lamb a copy of *Pamela,* under a mistaken belief that he had borrowed a previous copy and not returned it.

Letter CCCLXVII.

Darley's very poetical poem. Sylvia: or, the May Queen. 1827. "*Christmas.*" By Edward Moxon.

Field's Appendix. "Geographical Memoirs on New South Wales, by various hands," etc. etc. Edited by Barron Field, Esq., F. L. S., 1825. In the Appendix is printed "First Fruits of Australian Poetry," originally printed privately in New South Wales. See Lamb's notice of these poems, *Mrs. Leicester's School*, etc.

I have writ in the old Hamlet. A reprint of the first quarto (1603) of *Hamlet*, then lately discovered.

The copy thus sent was retained by Barton, in accordance with the permission given in this letter, and is now, through the kindness of Mrs. Edward FitzGerald, in the Editor's collection. On the fly-leaf, in Lamb's handwriting, is the inscription:—"Present this to Mr. Mitford in my name, if he has not got it.—C. L."

By being "woefully below our editions of it," Lamb means, of course, that the quarto of 1603 is but a first sketch, unless it be an unauthorised and garbled version of the play as we know it.

Letter CCCLXIX.

The report of thy torments. Crabb Robinson, in his *Diary*, quotes a letter of his own to Wordsworth of 22nd April, describing this attack:—"Went to bed at two, and in the morning found my left knee as crooked as the politics of the Ministry are, by the anti-Catholics, represented to be. After using leeches, poultices, etc., for three weeks, I went down to Brighton, and again, in a most unchristian spirit, put myself under the hands of the Mahomedan Mahomet—was stewed in his vapour-baths, and shampooed under his pagan paws."

NOTES

Letter CCCLXXI.

This, and a subsequent letter of 15th November, are on the subject of Mr. Walter Wilson's *Life and Times of De Foe*, then in preparation. The ode here referred to is Lamb's "Ode to the Treadmill," written in imitation of De Foe's "Ode to the Pillory." See *Poems, Plays, and Essays.*

Letter CCCLXXIII.

Our young friend Emma. Emma Isola, who was at this time governess to the Williamses at Fornham.

His name was Dibdin. The young man, Lamb's letters to whom I have now first printed. He returned from Madeira, as Lamb relates, and died of his "long disease" on May 11, 1828.

Southey's Dialogues. Sir Thomas More: or, Colloquies on the Progress and Prospects of Society. 1829.

In acknowledgment of a sonnet I sent him. See the sonnet, "To Samuel Rogers, Esq.," *Poems, Plays, and Essays.*

Letter CCCLXXIV.

Your kind inquisitive Eliza. Eliza Barton, Bernard Barton's sister.

An old rejected farce of mine. The Pawnbroker's Daughter.

Letter CCCLXXVI.

This letter is now printed for the first time, by the kind permission of Sir Edmund Elton of Clevedon Court. It was written to his grandfather, Sir Charles A. Elton, who succeeded to the baronetcy in 1842. Sir Charles (at the date of this letter, Mr. C. A. Elton) was a classical scholar and poet, who contributed largely to the *London Magazine*, a circumstance which first brought him and Lamb together. It will be remembered that he there wrote the lines signed "Olen," which had greatly pleased and touched Lamb. In the present instance he had evidently sent Lamb a present of several of his published vol-

umes, including his "Specimens of the Classical Poets translated into English verse" (1814), and his "Remains of Hesiod," similarly translated (1815). Lamb's criticisms apply mainly to these two volumes. The reference to the "tenderest parts in your own little volume," is certainly to the pathetic poem "The Brothers, a Monody," written by Elton on the death of his two sons by drowning in 1819, and published in the following year.

Letter CCCLXXVII.

Talfourd had christened his latest child, Charles Lamb Talfourd. The father adds this note: "The child who bore the name so honoured by his parents survived his godfather only a year, dying at Brighton, whither he had been taken in the vain hope of restoration, on the 3rd of December 1835."

Letter CCCLXXVIII.

An honest couple our neighbours. A Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Westwood. Mr. Westwood was a retired tradesman, and agent to the *Phœnix* Assurance Office.

Letter CCCLXXX.

Wilson's work on De Foe was just published. Lamb had contributed to it his "Estimate of De Foe's Secondary Novels." See *Mrs. Leicester's School*, etc. Lamb had written a letter to Wilson seven years (not fifteen) before, containing some remarks upon these novels, which Wilson also makes use of in his work on De Foe. Much of what he wrote in the friendly letter naturally reappeared in the more formal essay. Hence Lamb's allusion to the "two papers" puzzling the reader, "being so akin." Hazlitt reviewed Wilson's *Life and Times of De Foe* in the *Edinburgh* of January 1830.

Letter CCCLXXXI.

The excursionists. Mr. Westwood, Lamb's landlord, had driven

Mary Lamb over to Highgate to see the Gillmans and Coleridge. The note that follows this would appear to refer to a later excursion, conducted by the same "Son of Nimshi." But Lamb's habit of not dating letters confuses matters sadly.

Letter CCCLXXXIV.

Hazlitt has just been defrauded. By the failure of the publishers of his *Life of Napoleon.*

Letter CCCLXXXV.

Wordsworth's letter to Lamb, to which this is the reply, is given in Bishop Wordsworth's Memoirs of the Poet (ii. 223). It bears date 10th January of this year, and begins: "A whole twelvemonth have I been a letter in your debt, for which fault I have been sufficiently punished by self-reproach." The letter tells of the dangerous illness of Dorothy Wordsworth, and of Wordsworth's own weakened eyesight.

Henry Crabb is Henry Crabb Robinson.

Can I cram loves enough to you all in this little O? Those who know their Shakspeare will take the allusion to a line in the Chorus to Henry V.

Letter CCCLXXXVI.

To furnish A. C. with the scrap. A. C. is Allan Cunningham, who was preparing his *Lives of the Painters*, and wanted that portion of Lamb's letter to Barton of May 15, 1824, which referred to William Blake. The letter was sent to Cunningham, in accordance with the permission here given, but the "scrap" was apparently crowded out, for it did not appear in the first edition of Cunningham's work in the Family Library. It was, however, preserved among the Cunningham papers, and is given in the latest edition of the work in Bohn's Series.

That Joseph Paice. See Lamb's Elia Essay, "Modern Gallantry." In the *Athenæum* for the year 1841 (pp. 366 and 387),

will be found some interesting particulars of Mr. Paice, by the late Miss Anne Manning.

Letter CCCLXXXVII.

Your hopes about Dick Norris. Richard Norris, the son of Lamb's old friend, Randal Norris, Sub-Treasurer of the Inner Temple. Mrs. Hazlitt had noticed that *a* Mr. Norris was Treasurer of the Inn this year, and had too hastily inferred that young Norris had succeeded to his late father's post.

Letter CCCLXXXVIII.

The Rev. James Gillman was the son of Mr. Gillman of Highgate. Lamb's information concerning the Norwich people is, of course, what would in his day have been called "raillery," and in our day "chaff." Who Mr. Battin was, I know not. Talfourd assumes that this letter was to the elder Gillman, but the allusion to his correspondent having something "professionally" to say to the Revelations in Greek, seems to point to his being in holy orders. The friends in Spitalfields are, I presume, the weavers.

Letter CCCLXXXIX.

Phillips (not the Colonel). "Edward Phillips, Esq., Secretary to the Right Hon. Charles Abbott, Speaker of the House of Commons. The 'Colonel' alluded to was the Lieutenant of Marines who accompanied Captain Cook on his last voyage, and on shore with that great man when he fell a victim to his humanity" (Talfourd).

Mrs. B——'s. Obviously Mrs. Burney. An ingenious editor of Lamb's Letters has filled up the blank with Mrs. *Battle's* name! John Murray had proposed to Lamb to publish a supplementary volume of specimens from the old dramatists.

Letter CCCXC.

This letter was written after Lamb's return to London from a

visit to the Williamses at Fornham. He had taken Miss Isola, now convalescent after a severe attack of brain fever, back with him to Enfield. Two of the acrostics that Lamb wrote for the amusement of Mrs. Williams and her family were afterwards included by Lamb in his *Album Verses*, published this year. They will be found in *Poems, Plays, and Essays.* One is an acrostic epitaph on Mrs. Williams, her name being Grace Joanna Williams; the other on her youngest daughter, Louisa Clare.

Letter CCCXCI.

Mrs. Williams seems also to have been fond of writing acrostics, and had composed one on Mary Lamb.

She blames my last verses. This acrostic I now print for the first time. Lamb did not include it in his next volume of *Album Verses:—*

"Go little Poem, and present
Respectful terms of compliment;
A gentle lady bids thee speak!
Courteous is *she,* tho' thou be weak—
Evoke from Heaven as thick as manna

Joy after joy on Grace Joanna:
On Fornham's Glebe and Pasture land
A blessing pray. Long, long may stand,
Not touched by Time, the Rectory blithe;
No grudging churl dispute his Tithe;
At Easter be the offerings due

With cheerful spirit paid; each pew
In decent order filled; no noise
Loud intervene to drown the voice,
Learning, or wisdom of the Teacher;
Impressive be the Sacred Preacher,
And strict his notes on holy page;
May young and old from age to age
Salute, and still point out, 'The good man's Parsonage!'"

Letter CCCXCII.

My friend Hone. Hone was at this time established by the help of friends in the *Grasshopper* Coffee House in Gracechurch Street.

An epigram I did for a schoolboy. This schoolboy was the late Archdeacon Hessey, who published in the *Taylorian* (a periodical supported by the Merchant Taylors' boys) an account of his father taking him to see Lamb at Colebrook Cottage in 1825. See note in *Poems, Plays, and Essays.* Archdeacon Hessey informs us that the subject of the epigram was suggested by "the grim satisfaction which had recently been expressed by the public at the capture and execution of several notorious highwaymen."

Letter CCCXCIII.

Rogers's handsome behaviour to you. The poet had advanced Moxon £500 wherewith to set up in business as publisher. Moxon had published more than one volume of verse, including a book of sonnets of his own.

Letter CCCXCIV.

This delightful letter was first printed in the *Athenæum* a few years since, and is here given by the kind permission of the editor. Lamb adopts Procter's conceit of the island in Maggiore.

Letter CCCXCVIII.

Ayrton was here yesterday. Lamb elsewhere gives a quite different account of the origin of his verses on the Eminent Composers. In a letter to Ayrton, quoted in my note on the verses (*Poems, Plays, and Essays*), Lamb represents them as having been written at the request of Novello, who had desired Lamb "to give him my real opinion respecting the distinct grades of excellence in all the eminent composers of the Italian, Ger-

man, and English schools." I am afraid we cannot absolve Lamb from the charge of fibbing in one or other of these statements. Martin Burney, who was originally a solicitor, had been lately called to the Bar. The step did not prove a success.

Letter CCCXCIX.

There had been a suggestion that William Hazlitt's son, who was endowed with a fine voice, should adopt music as a profession. Ayrton, as a well-known authority on music, and impresario, would be naturally resorted to for counsel.

Letter CCCC.

The scheme for establishing Hone in a coffee-house business had been carried into effect, and Lamb, with characteristic helpfulness, arranges to have his newspaper at second-hand from the establishment in Gracechurch Street.

Letter CCCCI.

Lamb had just published, with Moxon, his *Album Verses.* The translations referred to are those from the Latin of Vincent Bourne.

Letter CCCCIII.

The little volume of *Album Verses* was rather rudely handled by the reviewers, notably by the *Literary Gazette.* This review, Talfourd tells us, provoked some verses from Southey, which were inserted in the *Times*, and of which the following, as evincing his unchanged friendship, may not unfitly be inserted here:—

"Charles Lamb! to those who know thee justly dear
For rarest genius, and for sterling worth,
Unchanging friendship, warmth of heart sincere,
And wit that never gave an ill thought birth,
Nor ever in its sport infixed a sting;
To us who have admired and loved thee long,

It is a proud as well as pleasant thing
To hear thy good report, now borne along
Upon the honest breath of public praise:
We know that with the elder sons of song,
In honouring whom thou hast delighted still,
Thy name shall keep its course to after days."

There were some further lines, very severe upon Lamb's recent critics.

Letter CCCCIV.

These lines were written, Mrs. Cowden Clarke tells us, "at the request of Vincent Novello, in memory of four sons and two daughters of John and Ann Rigg, of York. All six, respectively aged 19, 18, 17, 16, 7, and 6, were drowned at once by their boat being run down on the river Ouse, near York, August 19, 1830."

Letter CCCCV.

This note had been hitherto placed out of its order. After their two months' stay in London, Lamb had to take his sister back to Enfield. Southey came to London on a visit to John Rickman, at the House of Commons, on the 1st of November.

Letter CCCCVII.

From a later letter to Moxon we gain further particulars of George Dyer and his sensitive conscience. As far back as the end of the preceding century Dyer had written a couplet in his poem "The Poet's Fate" in which occurred some slighting mention of Rogers. A Mr. Barker, in his *Parriana*, had recently quoted and so revived the unfortunate couplet—hence Dyer's apprehensions.

Great Erasmians. Two forms at Christ's Hospital were nicknamed "Great Erasmus" and "Little Erasmus," probably from the fact that the *Colloquies* and other works of Erasmus were read in these forms. Grecian and Deputy-Grecian are also well-

known grades of distinction in the nomenclature of Christ's Hospital.

Letter CCCCIX.

"Good Man!—I have received your most friendly letter, and it occurred to me as I was about to answer it that the Latin Tongue has seldom or never been exchanged by us, as a medium for corresponding or speaking. Your letters, replete with Plinian elegancies (rather more than is seemly in a Quaker), are so remote from the language of Pliny that you do not appear to have a single word (a Roman word, of course, I mean) to 'throw to a dog,' as the saying is. Possibly a long disuse of writing Latin has driven you to the use of your vernacular tongue unnecessarily. I have resolved, therefore, to recall you to the recovery of your lost Latinity by means of certain familiar and generally well-known proverbs:—

"'The cat 's in the cupboard, and she can't see.'

"'All that glitters is not gold.'

"'Put a beggar on horseback and he will ride to the Devil.'

"'Set a thief to catch a thief.'

"'Mary, Mary, quite contrary, how does your garden grow?'

"Now let us sing of weightier themes!—

"'Tom, Tom, of Islington, married a wife on Sunday. He brought her home on Monday; Bought a stick on Tuesday; Beat her well on Wednesday; Sick was she on Thursday; Dead was she on Friday; Glad was Tom on Saturday night, to bury his wife on Sunday.'

"'Little Jack Horner sat in a corner,' etc. etc. etc.

> "'Diddle, diddle, dumkins! my son John
> Went to bed with his breeches on;
> One shoe off and the other shoe on,
> Diddle, diddle,' etc. (Da Capo.)
>
> "'Here am I, jumping Joan;
> When no one is by, I'm here alone.'

"Solve me this Riddle, and you will be an Œdipus. Why is a horse like a Quaker? Because his whole communication is by 'Hay and Neigh,' in accordance with the Scriptural injunction ('Yea and Nay').

"With these trifles I get through the precious day, while watching by the sick-bed of our more precious Emma, who has been at home with us ill, now for a long time. Mary joins me in best greetings; she is quite well. ELIA.

"Given at Enfield on one or other of the Calends of April. 'I am Davus, not'—almanack maker!

"*P. S.*—The Reform Bill is thrown out for good."

Letter CCCCX.

I append a free translation of the letter:—

"*Enfield, May 6, 1831.*

"My good sister is sitting by me, turning the leaves of the *Euripides*, your present, dearest Cary, for which we thank you, and mean to read it again and again. The book is doubly acceptable to us both, as the sacred work of the 'Priest of Compassion,' and as the gift of one, himself a Priest of the most humane Religion in the world.

"When in tears, we are on the eve of joy: there are times when sorrow becomes gladness; laughter is not always sweet; we must sometimes exchange He! He! He! for Heu! Heu! Heu! That the Tragic Muse is not wholly repugnant to me, witness this Song of Disaster, originally written by some unknown author in the vernacular, but lately turned by me into Latin—I mean, 'Tom of Islington.' Do you take? And finally Tom is filled with joy that on the following day (Sunday, to wit) his spouse must be carried out to burial. Lo! a domestic Iliad! A cycle of calamity! A seven-days' Tragedy!

"Go now and compare your vaunted *Euripides* with griefs like these! Such a death of wives as this! Where is your Al-

cestis now? your Hecuba? your other Dolorous Heroines of antiquity?

"My cheeks are bathed in tears as I muse upon these tragedies! What remains but to greet you and your own dear spouse, and to wish you as good health as we ourselves are enjoying. ELIA."

Letter CCCCXI.

Although the date of this letter has been hitherto given 1831, I believe that it should be 1821. The letter is evidently written to Mr. Taylor, the publisher of the *London*, at the time Lamb was contributing to that magazine his *Essays of Elia*. In the number for July 1821, appeared the essay "Mackery End in Hertfordshire," and it is in this essay that the stanza from Wordsworth occurs to which reference is obviously made:—

> "But thou, that didst appear so fair
> To fond Imagination,
> Dost rival in the light of *day*
> Her delicate creation!"

Taylor's proposed improvement of the stanza by the substitution of "air" for "day" is sufficiently amusing.

Letter CCCCXII.

Lamb contributed to the *Englishman's Magazine* of September 1831 a paper entitled "Recollections of a late Royal Academician" (see *Mrs. Leicester's School*, etc., and notes). This was Lamb's first contribution to the magazine after Moxon became its publisher. It was arranged that Lamb should furnish miscellaneous papers under the general heading of *Peter's Net*.

Janus Weathercock. The afterwards notorious Wainwright, the forger and poisoner.

The Athenæum has been hoaxed. The poem in question had appeared in Hone's *Year Book* (1831) under the date 30th April.

It was entitled "The Meadows in Spring," and was thus prefaced by its author, who signed himself "Epsilon":—"These verses are in the old style; rather homely in expression; but I honestly profess to stick more to the simplicity of the old poets than the moderns, and to love the philosophical good-humour of our old writers more than the sickly melancholy of the Byronian wits. If my verses be not good, they are good-humoured, and that is something." The verses, as Lamb points out, were again published, as a novelty, in the *Athenæum* of a few months later. The editor of the *Athenæum* (July 9, 1831) appended to them the following note:—"We have a suspicion that we could name the writer; if so, we are sure his name would grace our pages as much as his verses." It is Lamb that is here pointed to, and accordingly he now disowns the authorship. I am glad to be able, on the authority of my friend Mr. W. Aldis Wright, to clear up the mystery. The verses were certainly by the late Edward FitzGerald, then a young man of only one-and-twenty. Mr. Aldis Wright thus tells the story:—"In the year 1873 Edward FitzGerald told a correspondent of mine that when he was a lad, or rather more than a lad, he sent some verses to Hone, which were afterwards copied into the *Athenæum* of the time. These were ascribed to Charles Lamb, who wrote to say *he* did not write them—he wished he had." It is obvious that these are the verses referred to, signed with the first letter (Epsilon) of FitzGerald's favourite signature, E. F. G. The lines, which open thus—

> "'T is a dull sight
> To see the year dying,
> When autumn's last wind
> Sets the yellow wood sighing,
> Sighing, oh sighing"—

are very beautiful, in the style of the seventeenth-century poets, and we cannot wonder at Lamb envying the unknown author.

The Anecdotes of E. and of G. D. E. is Elliston, anecdotes of whom Lamb had contributed to the *Englishman's Magazine* in the August number, under the heading *Ellistoniana.* G. D. is, of course, the George Dawe just before named.

Montgomery's "Last Man." Was Lamb confusing Montgomery and Campbell, or was he thinking of Montgomery's "Common Lot," which we know to have been a favourite with him?

Letter CCCCXIV.

Moxon had just resolved to abandon his unsuccessful venture, the *Englishman's Magazine.*

Devil's Money. The sum paid by Moxon for Lamb's poetical squib, *Satan in Search of a Wife*, published this year in a thin volume, with illustrations (see *Mrs. Leicester's School*, etc.).

Any book on Christ's Hospital. J. I. Wilson's *History of Christ's Hospital* (1821). Several editions of this book contained quotations from Lamb and tributes to his genius. Mr. "Seagull" was perhaps Rev. John Seager.

Letter CCCCXVI.

Lamb sends Landor one of his volumes, probably the unfortunate *Satan in Search of a Wife.* Landor had sent some verses for Emma Isola's album.

Rose Aylmer. I may be pardoned for quoting once more Landor's lovely poem. The charm that Lamb could not explain lies partly perhaps in the singular beauty of the lady's name, and its repetition in the second stanza:—

"Ah! what avails the sceptred Race
And what the form divine?
What every virtue, every grace?
Rose Aylmer, all were thine!

"Rose Aylmer, whom these wakeful eyes
May weep, but never see,
A night of memories and of sighs
I consecrate to thee."

Separate fragments of this letter are given in Forster's *Life of Landor*. There we also learn that the "measureless B.'s" were the family of Mr. Charles Betham, a tenant of Landor's at Llanthony. He was the brother of Miss Matilda Betham, whose name has occurred more than once in Lamb's correspondence. See Forster's *Walter Savage Landor, a Biography*, i. 382–386.

Letter CCCCXVIII.

Mr. Moxon had sent Lamb his last two poetical publications. A. C. (Allan Cunningham) had brought out his *Maid of Elvar*, and B. C. (Barry Cornwall) a volume of songs and ballads. The poems whose titles follow are from the latter volume. "Epistle to What's his Name" is Procter's "Epistle to Charles Lamb on his Retirement from the India House," a tender and discriminating tribute.

Letter CCCCXIX.

Another of Lamb's elaborate fictions, though in this instance a fiction founded upon fact. A singularly brutal murder had been committed in Enfield on the night of December 19th in this year. The victim, a man of the name of Danby, then recently returned from India and supposed to have money about him, was drinking that evening in the parlour of the Crown and Horseshoe, in company with three men of the names of Johnson, Fare, and Cooper. Johnson and Cooper, when the hour for closing arrived, took Danby up a lane called Holt White's Hill, and there the murder was committed. All three men were arrested on the following morning. They were tried at the Old Bailey in January following. Fare was acquitted, Cooper turned king's evidence, but Johnson was convicted, and was hanged four days later.

The whole story of Lamb's accidental association with the accused men in the public-house parlour is, of course, a joke.

Probably there may have been a wig-maker of the name of Danby in the Temple when Lamb was a child, which gave him the opportunity for an additional experiment on his correspondent's credulity. A full account of the murder will be found in the *Annual Register* for 1833.

Letter CCCCXX.

Talfourd had just been made a serjeant. Lamb remembered him, fifteen years back, when he was a "Chitty-ling," or pupil of Joseph Chitty.

H. C. R. Henry Crabb Robinson, who never proceeded to the higher ranks of the advocate's profession.

Letter CCCCXXI.

Moxon was just about to publish the *Last Essays of Elia* in a volume. The "Friend's Preface" is the well-known preface written by Lamb himself, but purporting to be by "a friend of the late Elia."

Letter CCCCXXIII.

William Hone, in his latter years, reverted to the religious and dissenting associations of his youth, and became an occasional and very earnest preacher. Lamb playfully adapts his style to his friend's new vocation. The verses of Lamb's, which he inquires for, will be found in Hone's *Year Book* (*not* his *Table Book*), March 19, 1831. They are headed "To C. Aders, Esq., on his Collection of Paintings by the old German Masters." The lines are, to say the truth, not very good.

Letter CCCCXXVI.

Charles and Mary had just made what was destined to be their last change of residence, from Enfield to the neighbouring village of Edmonton. They now arranged to board and lodge with a Mr. and Mrs. Walden at Bay Cottage, in Church Street.

The name has been of late years changed, in honour of its distinguished occupants, to *Lamb's* Cottage. It is within a stone's throw of the parish church and of Lamb's grave.

Letter CCCCXXVII.

The *Last Essays of Elia* were just published in a volume by Moxon. They included one on the "Barrenness of the Imaginative Faculty in the Productions of Modern Art." The "Ariadne" of Titian in the National Gallery is there described and criticised, and it is to this that Lamb refers in the present letter. The "Popular Fallacies" were also reprinted in this volume from the *New Monthly Magazine.*

Letter CCCCXXXI.

This very fierce letter appears to refer to the lawsuit between Moxon and Taylor respecting the copyright in the essays forming the second series of *Elia.*

Letter CCCCXXXII.

This charming little note is here printed, I believe, for the first time. It pleasantly completes the story of Emma Isola's courtship by Edward Moxon. Mrs. Moxon died at Brighton on the 2nd of February 1891, at the age of eighty-two. She was accordingly twenty-four at the time of her marriage.

Letter CCCCXXXV.

Edward Moxon was preparing a new collection of sonnets, afterwards published in a slender octavo, dedicated to Wordsworth, in 1835. It included several inspired by his "young Bride." Moxon accepted one at least of Lamb's corrections; for the fifth sonnet, when printed, opened thus—

> "Four days, wild Ocean, on thy troubled breast
> A wanderer I have been!"

Knowles's play, epilogued by me.—"The Wife."

Letter CCCCXXXVI.

An early copy of Rogers's volume of poems, with illustrations by Turner and Stothard, published in 1834, had been sent to Lamb.

A sonnet in the "Times." I have not been able to discover whether this poem ever appeared in the journal named.

Your artist. Thomas Stothard. He died within a few months of this mention of him, in April 1834, at the age of seventy-nine. The verses, published in the *Athenæum*, beginning—

> "Consummate artist, whose undying name
> With classic Rogers shall go down to fame,"

will be found in *Mrs. Leicester's School*, etc.

Poor Henry's. Henry Rogers, brother of the poet.

Coleridge's happy exemplification. Lamb, after his custom, does not quote the lines correctly, nor does he appear to have been aware that they were translated from Schiller—

> "In the Hexameter rises the fountain's silvery column;
> In the Pentameter aye, falling in melody back."

Coleridge's version was first printed in *Friendship's Offering*, 1834.

Letter CCCCXXXVII.

This letter was first printed by me from the original in the possession of B. MacGeorge, Esq., of Glasgow. It is worthy of preservation, if only for the beautiful thought in the last sentence.

The kind legacy refers to a legacy of £30 from Anne Betham to Mary Lamb.

Letter CCCCXXXVIII.

Miss Fryer, of Chatteris in Cambridgeshire, was an old schoolfellow of Emma Isola. Dover Street was now the home of the

Edward Moxons, and was to achieve a deservedly high name in association with poets and poetry.

Letter CCCCXXXIX.

Louisa Martin was an old friend of Lamb and his sister. She bore the nickname of "Monkey," and some verses addressed to her will be found in *Poems, Plays, and Miscellaneous Essays.*

Letter CCCCXL.

This interesting and touching letter was first printed by me from the original in Rev. C. R. Manning's possession.

Wright's is, of course, meant for Wright's translation of Dante, and the *faithfulness of C.* for Cary's.

Letter CCCCXLI.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge died at Mr. Gillman's, Highgate, on the 25th of July 1834. "Shortly after," Talfourd tells us, "assured that his presence would be welcome, Lamb went to Highgate. There he asked leave to see the nurse who had attended upon Coleridge; and being struck and affected by the feeling she manifested towards his friend, insisted on her receiving five guineas from him."

Letter CCCCXLII.

Mr. Cary had just returned from a tour through Normandy and the South of France. It was in the previous year that he had visited Holland and Germany. This note is in answer to an invitation to the resumed monthly dinners at the Museum.

Letter CCCCXLIII.

"In December 1834 Mr. Lamb received a letter from a gentleman, a stranger to him—Mr. Childs of Bungay, whose copy of *Elia* had been sent on an Oriental voyage, and who, in order to replace it, applied to Mr. Lamb." (Talfourd.)

Letter CCCCXLIV.

Mr. Cary's son, in his Memoir of his father, does not print this letter, though he gives other letters of Lamb's. Talfourd gives it without any date. It has been hitherto assumed to belong to the preceding year, but there are reasons why I think this unlikely.

Letter CCCCXLV.

"The following notelet is in answer to a letter inclosing a list of candidates for a Widow's Fund Society, for which he was entitled to vote. *A* Mrs. Southey headed the inclosed list." (Talfourd.)

Letter CCCCXLVI.

The Rev. Henry Cary, in the Memoir of his father, after quoting Lamb's short note of 12th September, adds:—"Not many weeks after, Lamb died. He had borrowed of my father Phillips's *Theatrum Poetarum Anglicanorum*, which was returned by Lamb's friend, Mr. Moxon, with the leaf folded down at the account of Sir Philip Sydney."

Mr. Cary acknowledged the receipt of the book by the following

LINES TO THE MEMORY OF CHARLES LAMB

"So should it be, my gentle friend;
Thy leaf last closed at Sydney's end.
Thou, too, like Sydney, wouldst have given
The water, thirsting and near heaven;
Nay, were it wine, filled to the brim,
Thou hadst look'd hard, but given, like him.

"And art thou mingled then among
Those famous sons of ancient song?
And do they gather round, and praise
Thy relish of their nobler lays?
Waxing in mirth to hear thee tell
With what strange mortals thou didst dwell!

At thy quaint sallies more delighted,
Than any's long among them lighted!

"'T is done: and thou hast joined a crew
To whom thy soul was justly due;
And yet, I think, where'er thou be,
They 'll scarcely love thee more than we."

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